JOURNEYS THROUGH BOOKLAND

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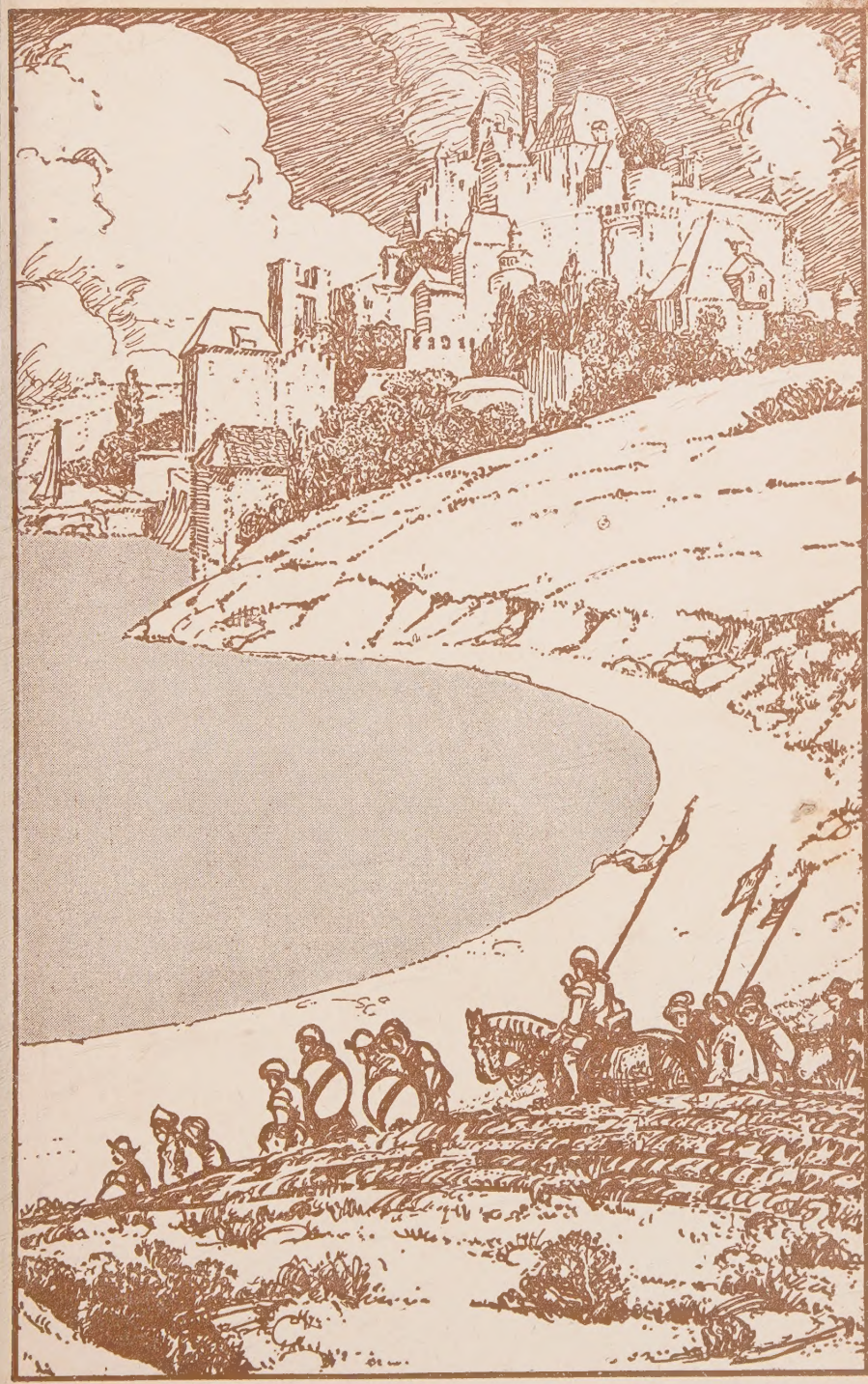

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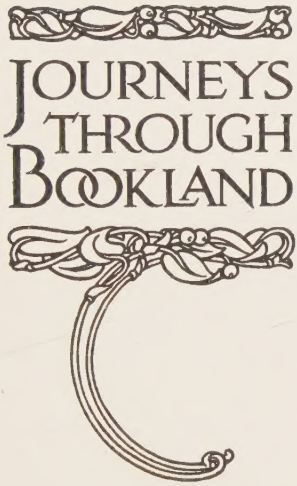
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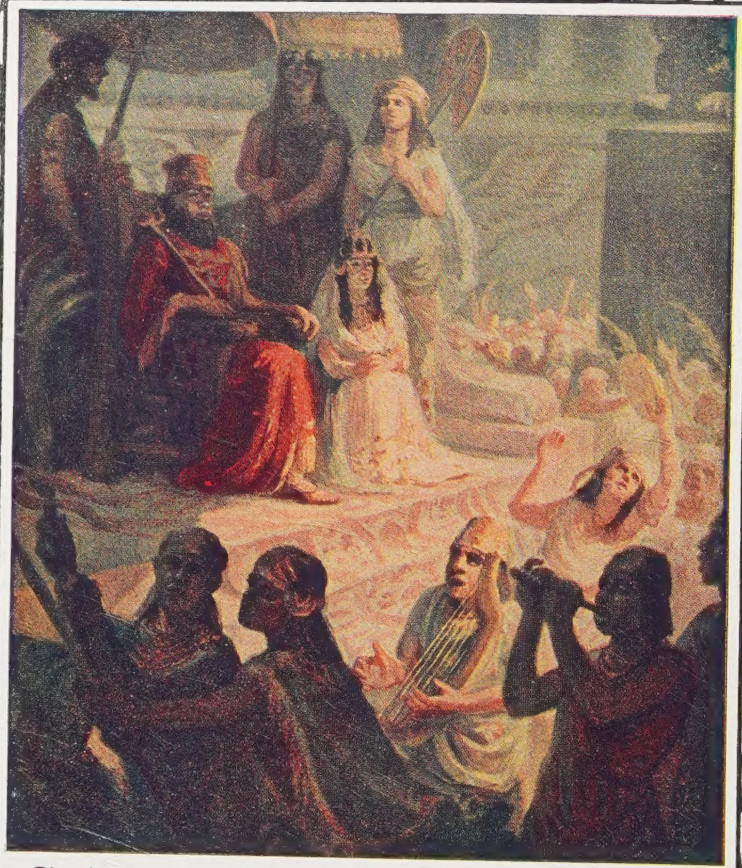

Esther and King Ahasuerus

Journeys Through Bookland

A New and Original Plan for Reading, Applied to the World's Best Literature for Children

BY

Charles H. Sylvester

AUTHOR OF *English and American Literature, Etc.*

VOLUME TWO

BELLOWS-REEVE COMPANY

CHICAGO

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Initial letters, tailpieces and other decorations by Mrs. Thomas Wood Stevens, Frederick Grant and Miss Edith Virden.

ÆSOP

MANY centuries ago, more than six hundred years before Christ was born, there lived in Greece a man by the name of Æsop. We do not know very much about him, and no one can tell exactly what he wrote, or even that he ever wrote anything.

We know he was a slave and much wiser than his masters, but whether he was a fine, shapely man or a hunchback and a cripple we cannot be sure, for different people have written very differently about him.

No matter what he was or how he lived, many, many stories are still told about him, and the greater part of the fables we all like to read are said to have been written or told by him, and everybody still calls them Æsop's fables.

Some of the stories told about him are curious indeed. Here are a few of them.

In those days men were sold as slaves in the market, as cattle are sold now. One day Æsop and two other men were put up at auction. Xanthus, a wealthy man, wanted a slave, and he said to the men:

"What can you do?"

The two men bragged largely about the things they could do, for both wanted a rich master like Xanthus.

"But what can you do?" said Xanthus, turning to Æsop.

"The others can do so much and so well," said Æsop, "that there's nothing left for me to do."

"Will you be honest and faithful if I buy you?"

"I shall be that whether you buy me or not."

"Will you promise not to run away?"

"Did you ever hear," answered Æsop, "of a bird in a cage that promised to stay in it?"

Xanthus was so much pleased with the answers that he bought Æsop.

Some time afterward, Xanthus, wishing to give a dinner to some of his friends, ordered Æsop to furnish the finest feast that money could buy.

The first course Æsop supplied was of tongues cooked in many ways, and the second of tongues and the third and the fourth. Then Xanthus called sharply to Æsop:

"Did I not tell you, sirrah, to provide the choicest dainties that money could procure?"

"And what excels the tongue?" replied Æsop. "It is the great channel of learning and philosophy. By this noble organ everything wise and good is accomplished."

The company applauded Æsop's wit, and good humor was restored.

"Well," said Xanthus to the guests, "pray do me the favor of dining with me again tomorrow. And if this is your best," continued

he, turning to Æsop, "pray, to-morrow let us have some of the worst meat you can find."

The next day, when dinner-time came, the guests were assembled. Great was their astonishment and great the anger of Xanthus at finding that again nothing but tongue was put upon the table.

"How, sir," said Xanthus, "should tongues be the best of meat one day, and the worst another?"

"What," replied Æsop, "can be worse than the tongue? What wickedness is there under the sun that it has not a part in? Treasons, violence, injustice, and fraud are debated and resolved upon by the tongue. It is the ruin of empires, of cities, and of private friendships."

At another time Xanthus very foolishly bet with a scholar that he could drink the sea dry. Alarmed, he consulted Æsop.

"To perform your wager," said Æsop, "you know is impossible, but I will show you how to evade it."

They accordingly met the scholar, and went with him and a great number of people to the seashore, where Æsop had provided a table with several large glasses upon it, and men who stood around with ladles with which to fill the glasses.

Xanthus, instructed by Æsop, gravely took his seat at the table. The beholders looked on with astonishment, thinking that he must surely have lost his senses.

"My agreement," said he, turning to the

scholar, "is to drink up the sea. I said nothing of the rivers and streams that are everywhere flowing into it. Stop up these, and I will proceed to fulfill my engagement."

It is said that at one time when Xanthus started out on a long journey, he ordered his servants to get all his things together and put them up into bundles so that they could carry them.

When everything had been neatly tied up, Æsop went to his master and begged for the lightest bundle. Wishing to please his favorite slave, the master told Æsop to choose for himself the one he preferred to carry. Looking them all over, he picked up the basket of bread and started off with it on the journey. The other servants laughed at his foolishness, for that basket was the heaviest of all.

When dinner-time came, Æsop was very tired, for he had had a difficult time to carry his load for the last few hours. When they had rested, however, they took bread from the basket, each taking an equal share. Half the bread was eaten at this one meal, and when supper-time came the rest of it disappeared.

For the whole remainder of the journey, which ran far into the night and was over rough roads, up and down hills, Æsop had nothing to carry, while the loads of the other servants grew heavier and heavier with every step.

The people of the neighborhood in which Æsop was a slave one day observed him atten-

ÆSOP, by VELASQUEZ

tively looking over some poultry in a pen that was near the roadside; and those idlers, who spent more time in prying into other people's affairs than in adjusting their own, asked why he bestowed his attention on those animals.

"I am surprised," replied Æsop, "to see how mankind imitate this foolish animal."

"In what?" asked the neighbors.

"Why, in crowing so well and scratching so poorly," rejoined Æsop.

Fables, you know, are short stories, usually about animals and things, which are made to talk like human beings. Fables are so bright and interesting in themselves that both children and grown-ups like to read them. Children see first the story, and bye and bye, after they have thought more about it and have grown older, they see how much wisdom there is in the fables.

For an example, there is the fable of the crab and its mother. They were strolling along the sand together when the mother said, "Child, you are not walking gracefully. You should walk straight forward, without twisting from side to side."

"Pray, mother," said the young one, "if you will set the example, I will follow it."

Perhaps children will think the little crab was not very respectful, but older people see that often parents do not set very good examples for their children, and that it is always easier to give good advice than it is to follow it.

MINERVA AND THE OWL

"MY most solemn and wise bird," said Minerva one day to her Owl, "I have hitherto admired you for your profound silence; but I have now a mind to have you show your ability in discourse, for silence is only admirable in one who can, when he pleases, triumph by his eloquence and charm with graceful conversation."

The Owl replied by solemn grimaces, and made dumb signs. Minerva bade him lay aside that affectation and begin; but he only shook his wise head and remained silent. Thereupon Minerva commanded him to speak immediately, on pain of her displeasure.

The Owl, seeing no remedy, drew up close to Minerva, and whispered very softly in her ear this sage remark:

"Since the world is grown so depraved, they ought to be esteemed most wise who have eyes to see and wit to hold their tongues."

THE FALCON AND THE PARTRIDGE

FROM THE ARABIAN NIGHTS

ONCE upon a time a Falcon stooped from its flight and seized a Partridge; but the latter freed himself from the seizer, and entering his nest, hid himself there. The Falcon followed apace and called out to him, saying:

THE FALCON SEIZED THE PARTRIDGE

"O imbecile, I saw you hungry in the field and took pity on you; so I picked up for you some grain and took hold of you that you might eat; but you fled from me, and I know not the cause of your flight, except it were to put upon me a slight. Come out, then, and take the

grain I have brought you to eat, and much good may it do you, and with your health agree."

When the Partridge heard these words he believed, and came out to the Falcon, who thereupon struck his talons into him and seized him.

Cried the Partridge, "Is this that which you told me you had brought me from the field, and whereof you told me to eat, saying, 'Much good may it do you, and with your health agree?' Thou hast lied to me, and may God cause what you eat of my flesh to be a killing poison in your maw!"

When the Falcon had eaten the Partridge his feathers fell off, his strength failed, and he died on the spot. Know that he who digs for his brother a pit, himself soon falls into it.

THE SPARROW AND THE EAGLE

FROM THE ARABIAN NIGHTS

NCE a Sparrow, flitting over a flock of sheep, saw a great Eagle swoop down upon a newly weaned lamb and carry it up in his claws and fly away. Thereupon the Sparrow clapped his wings and said, "I will do even as this Eagle did."

So he waxed proud in his own conceit, and, mimicking one greater than he, flew down forthright and lighted on the back of a fat ram with a thick fleece, that was matted by his lying till it was like woolen felt. As soon as

THE SHEPHERD SEIZED THE WEE BIRDIE

the Sparrow pounced upon the sheep's back he flopped his wings to fly away, but his feet became tangled in the wool, and, however hard he tried, he could not set himself free.

While all this was passing, the shepherd was looking on, having seen what happened first

with the Eagle and afterward with the Sparrow. So in a great rage he came up to the wee birdie and seized him. He plucked out his wing feathers and carried him to his children.

"What is this?" asked one of them.

"This," he answered, "is he that aped a greater than himself and came to grief."

THE OLD MAN AND DEATH

A POOR and toil-worn peasant, bent with years and groaning beneath the weight of a heavy fagot of firewood which he carried, sought, weary and sore-footed on a long and dusty road, to gain his distant cottage. Unable to bear the weight of his burden any longer, he let it fall by the roadside, and lamented his hard fate.

"What pleasure have I known since I first drew breath in this sad world? From dawn to dusk it has been hard work and little pay! At home is an empty cupboard, a discontented wife, and lazy and disobedient children! O Death! O Death! come and free me from my troubles!"

At once the ghostly King of Terrors stood before him. "What do you want with me?" Death queried in hollow tones.

"Noth—nothing," stammered the awed and frightened peasant, "nothing except for you to help me put again upon my shoulders the bundle of fagots I have let fall!"

JOY BEFALL THEE

INFANT JOY

WILLIAM BLAKE

"I have no name;
I am but two days old."
"What shall I call thee?"
"I happy am;
Joy is my name."
Sweet joy befall thee!

Pretty Joy!
Sweet Joy, but two days old.
Sweet Joy I call thee:
Thou dost smile:
I sing the while,
"Sweet joy befall thee!"

OUT OF THE EVERYWHERE

THE BABY

GEORGE MACDONALD

Where did you come from, baby dear?
Out of the everywhere into the here.

Where did you get your eyes so blue?
Out of the sky as I came through.

What makes the light in them sparkle and spin?
Some of the starry spikes left in.

Where did you get that little tear?
I found it waiting when I got here.

What makes your forehead so smooth and high?
A soft hand stroked it as I went by.

What makes your cheek like a warm white rose?
Something better than any one knows.

Whence that three-cornered smile of bliss?
Three angels gave me at once a kiss.

Where did you get that pearly ear?
God spoke, and it came out to hear.

Where did you get those arms and hands?
Love made itself into hooks and bands.

Feet, whence did you come, you darling things?
From the same box as the cherub's wings.

How did they all just come to be you?
God thought about me, and so I grew.

But how did you come to us, you dear?
God thought of *you*, and so I am here.

THE DISCONTENTED STONECUTTER

ADAPTED FROM THE JAPANESE

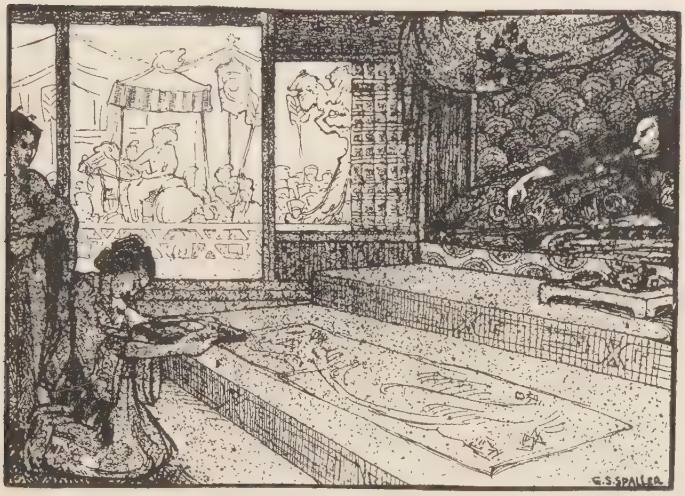
NCE upon a time there was a man who worked from early morning till late at night cutting building stones out of the solid rock. His pay was small and hardly enough to keep his wife and children from starving. So the poor stonecutter grew discontented and sighed and moaned bitterly over his hard lot.

One day when his work seemed harder than usual and his troubles more than he could bear he cried out in despair:

"Oh, I wish I could be rich and lie at ease on a soft couch with a curtain of red silk!"

Just then a beautiful fairy floated down from heaven, and softly said, "Thy wish is granted thee." So the poor stonecutter found himself rich and powerful and resting easily on his silken couch with its red curtain. As he gazed out, however, he saw the king of the country ride by with many horsemen before and behind him, and with a great golden sunshade held over his head. It irritated the rich man to have no parasol over his head and to see another more powerful than himself, and in his discontentment he exclaimed, "Would that I were a king such as that one."

Once again his good fairy appeared, waved



THE STONECUTTER RESTED EASILY ON HIS SILKEN COUCH

his wand, and said, "It shall be as thou desirest." Immediately the man was king, and before him and behind him rode his men-at-arms, and over his head was a golden sunshade. But elsewhere the sun shone fiercely down and dried up the vegetation with its terrible heat. It was reflected into the face of the king so that even the golden sunshade did not keep him from suffering. Once more he sighed discontentedly, "If I could only be the sun!"

Almost before he spoke he found himself to be the sun, and he began joyously to send his fiery rays above, below and everywhere roundabout him. He scorched the grass of the earth, and burned the faces of its rulers and felt his power unlimited until a little cloud placed itself between him and the earth and threw

back his scorching rays. It still angered him to find something more powerful than himself, and he wished aloud that he might be the cloud.

Again his wish was granted, and he found himself floating where he wished through the sky. He ran between the sun and the earth and sheltered the latter so that the grass grew green, the trees leaved out again, and everything rejoiced in a new growth. Then he sent great floods of rain upon the earth, filled the rivers till they overflowed, swept homes and herds into the sea, and destroyed the works of man in every direction. But try as he would he could not move one great rock that stood right across his way. Though he sent waters that roared around its base and pushed hard against it, yet it remained immovable. Such a failure angered the man-cloud, and again he cried out, "Would that I were a rock, so strong and immovable is it."

This time, also, his guardian angel interfered, and he found himself a rock that withstood the sun, the wind and the waters. But then, one day, there came along a rude stonecutter, who with chisel and heavy hammer began to cut the great rock into small, regular building stones. "What does this mean?" cried the rock. "Has this man power to cut me in pieces? Surely I am weaker than he! Would I were a stonecutter!"

"As thou wishest, so shall it be," said his guardian angel, and immediately he was again a stonecutter, working hard as before and for small wages, but happy and contented with his lot.

DISCREET HANS

WILHELM AND JAKOB GRIMM

ANS'S mother asked, "Whither are you going, Hans?"

"To Grethel's," replied he.

"Behave well, Hans."

"I will take care; good-bye, mother."

"Good-bye, Hans."

Hans came to Grethel. "Good day," said he.

"Good day," replied Grethel. "What treasure do you bring to-day?"

"I bring nothing. Have you anything to give?"

Grethel presented Hans with a needle.

"Good-bye," said he.

"Good-bye, Hans."

Hans took the needle, stuck it in a load of hay, and walked home behind the wagon.

"Good evening, mother."

"Good evening, Hans. Where have you been?"

"To Grethel's."

"And what have you given her?"

"Nothing; she has given me something."

"What has Grethel given you?"

"A needle," said Hans.

"And where have you put it?"

"In the load of hay."

"Then you have behaved stupidly, Hans; you should put needles on your coat sleeve."

"To behave better, do nothing at all," thought Hans.

"Whither are you going, Hans?"

"To Grethel's, mother."

"Behave well, Hans."

"I will take care; good-bye, mother."

"Good-bye, Hans."

Hans came to Grethel. "Good day," said he.

"Good day, Hans. What treasure do you bring?"

"I bring nothing. Have you anything to give?"

Grethel gave Hans a knife.

"Good-bye, Grethel."

"Good-bye, Hans."

Hans took the knife, put it in his sleeve and went home.

"Good evening, mother."

"Good evening, Hans. Where have you been?"

"To Grethel's."

"And what did you take to her?"

"I took nothing; she has given something to me."

"And what did she give you?"

"A knife," said Hans.

"And where have you put it?"

"In my sleeve."

"Then you have behaved foolishly again, Hans; you should put knives in your pocket."

"To behave better, do nothing at all," thought Hans.

"Whither are you going, Hans?"

"To Grethel's, mother."

"Behave well, Hans."

"I will take care; good-bye, mother."

"Good-bye, Hans."

Hans came to Grethel. "Good day, Grethel."

"Good day, Hans. What treasure do you bring?"

"I bring nothing; have you anything to give?"

Grethel gave Hans a young goat.

"Good-bye, Grethel."

"Good-bye, Hans."

Hans took the goat, tied its legs and put it in his pocket. Just as he reached home it was suffocated.

"Good evening, mother."

"Good evening, Hans. Where have you been?"

"To Grethel's."

"And what did you take to her?"

"I took nothing; she gave to me."

"And what did Grethel give you?"

"A goat."

"Where did you put it, Hans?"

"In my pocket."

"There you acted stupidly, Hans; you should have tied the goat with a rope."

"To behave better, do nothing," thought Hans.

"Whither away, Hans?"

"To Grethel's, mother."

"Behave well, Hans."

"I will take care; good-bye, mother."

"Good-bye, Hans."

Hans came to Grethel. "Good day," said he.

"Good day, Hans. What treasure do you bring?"

"I have nothing. Have you anything to give?"

Grethel gave Hans a piece of bacon.

"Good-bye, Grethel."

"Good-bye, Hans."

Hans took the bacon, tied it with a rope, and swung it to and fro, so that the dogs came and ate it up. When he reached home he held the rope in his hand, but there was nothing on it.

"Good evening, mother," said he.

"Good evening, Hans. Where have you been?"

"To Grethel's, mother."

"What did you take her?"

"I took nothing; she gave to me."

"And what did Grethel give you?"

"A piece of bacon," said Hans.

"And where have you put it?"

"I tied it with a rope, swung it about, and the dogs came and ate it up."

"There you acted stupidly, Hans; you should have carried the bacon on your head."

"To behave better, do nothing," thought Hans.

"Whither away, Hans?"

"To Grethel's, mother."

"Behave well, Hans."

"I'll take care; good-bye, mother."

"Good-bye, Hans."

Hans came to Grethel. "Good day," said he.

"Good day, Hans. What treasure do you bring?"

"I bring nothing. Have you anything to give?"

Grethel gave Hans a calf. "Good-bye," said Hans. "Good-bye," said Grethel.

Hans took the calf, set it on his head, and the calf scratched his face.

"Good evening, mother."

"Good evening, Hans. Where have you been?"

"To Grethel's."

"What did you take to her?"

"I took nothing; she gave to me."

"And what did Grethel give you?"

"A calf," said Hans.

"And what did you do with it?"

"I set it on my head and it kicked my face."

"Then you acted stupidly, Hans; you should have led the calf home and put it in the stall."

"To behave better, do nothing," thought Hans.

"Whither away, Hans?"

"To Grethel's, mother."

"Behave well, Hans."

"I'll take care; good-bye, mother."

"Good-bye, Hans."

Hans came to Grethel. "Good day," said he.

"Good day, Hans. What treasure do you bring?"

"I bring nothing. Have you anything to give?"

HANS LED GRETHEL HOME

Grethel said, "I will go with you, Hans."

Hans tied a rope round Grethel, led her home, put her in the stall and made the rope fast; then he went to his mother.

"Good evening, mother."

"Good evening, Hans. Where have you been?"

"To Grethel's."

"What did you take her?"

"I took nothing."

"What did Grethel give you?"

"She gave nothing; she came with me."

"And where have you left her, then?"

"I tied her with a rope, put her in the stall, and threw her some grass."

"Then you have acted stupidly, Hans; you should have looked at her with friendly eyes."

"To behave better, do nothing," thought Hans; and then he went into the stall, and made sheep's eyes at Grethel.

And after that Grethel became Hans's wife.

The Brothers Grimm, Jakob and Wilhelm, were very learned German scholars who lived during the first half of the nineteenth century. They were both professors at the University of Göttingen, and published many important works, among them a famous dictionary. In their own country it is, of course, these learned works which have given them much of their fame, but in other countries they are chiefly known for their *Fairy Tales.*

Most of these they did not themselves write; they simply collected and rewrote. They would hear of some old woman who was famous for telling stories remembered from childhood, and they would present themselves at her cottage to bribe or wheedle her into telling them her tales. Perhaps the promise that her words should appear in print would be enough to induce her to talk; perhaps hours would be wasted in trying to make her grow talkative, without success. At any rate, the Grimm brothers finally collected enough of these stories to make a big, fat book.

BLUEBEARD

ONCE upon a time there lived a great lord who had many beautiful homes and who was fairly rolling in wealth. He had town houses and castles in the country, all filled with rich furniture and costly vessels of gold and silver. In spite of all his riches, however, nobody liked the man, because of his ugly and frightful appearance. Perhaps people could have endured his face if it had not been for a great blue beard that frightened the women and children until they fled at his very approach.

Now, it so happened that there was living near one of his castles a fine lady of good breeding who had two beautiful daughters. Bluebeard, for such was the name by which he was known through all the country, saw the two daughters and determined to have one of them for his wife. So he proposed to the mother for one, but left it to her to decide which of the daughters she would give him.

Neither of the daughters was willing to marry him, for neither could make up her mind to live all her life with such a hideous blue beard, however rich the owner might be. Moreover, they had heard, and the report was true, that the man had been married several times before, and no one knew what had become of his wives.

In order to become better acquainted with the women, Bluebeard invited them and their mother to visit him at one of his castles in the country. They accepted the invitation, and for nine delightful days they hunted and fished over his vast estates, and for nine wonderful evenings they feasted and danced in his magnificent rooms.

Everything went so much to their liking, and Bluebeard himself was so gracious, that the younger girl began to think that after all his beard was not so very blue; and so, soon after their return to town, the mother announced that the younger daughter was ready to marry him. In a few days the ceremony was performed, and Bluebeard took his wife to one of his castles, where they spent a happy month.

At the end of that time Bluebeard told his wife that he was obliged to make a long journey and would be away from home about six weeks. He added that he hoped his wife would enjoy herself, and that he wished her to send for her friends if she wanted them, and to spend his money as freely as she liked in their entertainment.

"Here," he said, "are the keys of my two great storerooms, where you will find everything you need for the house; here are the keys of the sideboards, where you will find all the gold and silver plate for the table; here are the keys of my money chests, where you will find gold and silver in abundance and many caskets containing beautiful jewels which you have not

yet seen; and here is a pass key which will open all the rooms in the castle excepting one.

"But here is a little key which fits the lock in the door of the little room at the end of the long gallery on the first floor. This little room you must not enter. Open everything else, go everywhere you like, treat everything as though it was your own; but I strictly forbid you to enter the little room. If you even so much as put the key in the lock you may expect to suffer direfully from my anger."

The young wife promised faithfully to observe her husband's wishes to the letter, and he, pleased with the readiness with which she consented to obey him, kissed her fondly, sprang into his carriage and departed on his journey.

No sooner had Bluebeard left than the friends of his wife began to arrive. Many of them did not wait for an invitation, but came as soon as they heard that her husband had gone with his terrible blue beard. Then was there great merrymaking all over the house, and it was overrun from top to bottom with the excited guests, for all were consumed with the desire to see the treasures the castle contained. These were truly wonderful. Rich tapestries hanging on the walls, great mirrors that reflected the whole image of a person from head to foot, wonderful pictures in frames of pure gold, gold and silver vessels of graceful shape and elegant design, cabinets filled with curiosities, lights gleaming with crystals, caskets filled with sparkling diamonds and other precious stones without

SHE SLIPPED SILENTLY AWAY

number, all served to charm and delight the guests so that they had little time to think about their hostess.

The wife, however, soon wearied of the splendor of her home, for she kept continually thinking about the little room at the end of the long gallery on the first floor. The more she thought about it the more curious she became, and finally, forgetting her good manners, she left her guests, slipped silently away from them, and in her excitement nearly fell the whole length of the secret stairway that led to the long gallery. Her courage did not fail her till she reached the door of the little room. Then she remembered how false she was to her trust, and hesitated. Her conscience, however, was soon silenced by her curiosity, and with a beating

heart and trembling hand she pushed the little key into the lock, and the door flew open.

The shutters of the window in the little room were closed, and at first she could see nothing; but as her eyes became accustomed to the dim light she saw that clotted blood covered the floor, and that hanging from the walls by their long hair were the bloody heads of Bluebeard's other wives, while on the floor lay their dead bodies.

When the young wife realized at what she was looking, the key fell from her shaking hand, her heart stopped beating, and she almost fell to the floor in horror and amazement. Recovering herself after a little, she stooped and picked up the key, locked the door and hurried back to her chamber. In vain she tried to compose herself and meet her guests again. She was too frightened to control herself, and when she looked at the little key of that awful little room at the end of the long gallery on the first floor, she saw that it was stained with blood. She wiped the key and wiped it, but the blood would not come off. She washed it, and scrubbed it with sand and freestone and brick dust, but the blood would not come off; or, if she did succeed in cleaning one side and turned the key over, there was blood on the other side, for it was a magic key which a fairy friend of Bluebeard's had given him.

That night the wife was terrified to hear Bluebeard returning, though she tried to welcome him with every show of delight and affection. He explained his sudden change of plans

by saying that he had met a friend on the road who told him that it was unnecessary for him to make the long journey, as the business he was intending to transact had been all done.

It was a very unhappy night she passed, but Bluebeard said nothing to disturb her until morning, and then he presently asked her for his keys. She gave them to him, but her hand trembled like an old woman's. Bluebeard took the keys and looked them over carelessly.

"I see the key of the little room at the end of the long gallery on the first floor is not with the others. Where is it?"

"It must have fallen off in the drawer where I kept the keys," she said.

"Please get it for me at once," said Bluebeard, "as I wish to go to the room."

The wife, as white as a sheet, and almost too faint to walk, went back to her chamber and returned, saying she could not find the key.

"But I must have it," said Bluebeard; "go again and look more carefully for it. Certainly you cannot have lost it."

So back to the chamber went the terrified woman, and, seeing no hope of escape, she carried the key down to her waiting husband.

Bluebeard took the key, and looking at it closely, said to his wife, "Why is this blood spot on the key?"

"I do not know," said the wife, faintly.

"You do not know!" said Bluebeard. "Well, I know. You wanted to go to the little room.

Very well; I shall see that you get there and take your place with the other ladies."

In despair the young woman flung herself at his feet and begged for mercy, repenting bitterly of her curiosity. Bluebeard turned a deaf ear to all her entreaties and was not moved in the least by her piteous beauty.

"Hear me, madam. You must die at once," he said.

"But give me a little time to make my peace with God," she said. "I must have time to say my prayers."

"I will give you a quarter of an hour," answered Bluebeard, "but not a minute more."

He turned away, and she sent for her sister, who came quickly at her summons.

"Sister Ann," she said excitedly, "go up to the top of the tower and see if my brothers are coming. They promised to come and see me to-day. If they are on the road make signs to them to hurry as fast as they can. I am in awful despair."

Without waiting for an explanation the sister went up to the top of the tower and began her watch.

She was scarcely seated when her sister called up, "Sister Annie, do you see any one coming?"

Annie answered, "I see nothing but the sun on the golden dust and the grass which grows green."

In the meantime, Bluebeard, who had armed himself with a sharp, curved scimitar, stood at the foot of the stairs waiting for his wife to come down.

SISTER ANN ON THE WATCHTOWER

"Annie, sister Annie, do you see any one coming down the road?" cried the wife again.

"No, I see nothing but the golden dust."

Then Bluebeard called out, "Come down quickly now, or I will come up to you."

"One minute more," replied his wife; and

then she called softly, "Annie, sister Annie, do you see any one coming?"

"I think I see a cloud of dust a little to the left."

"Do you think it is my brothers?" said the wife.

"Alas, no, dear sister, it is only a shepherd boy with his sheep."

"Will you come down now, madam, or shall I fetch you?" Bluebeard bawled out.

"I am coming,—indeed I will come in just a minute."

Then she called out for the last time, "Annie, sister Annie, do you see any one coming?"

"I see," replied her sister, "two horsemen coming, but they are still a great way off."

"Thank God," cried the wife, "it is my brothers. Urge them to make haste."

Annie replied, "I am beckoning to them. They have seen my signals. They are galloping towards us."

Now Bluebeard called out so loudly for his wife to come down that his voice shook the whole house. His lady, not daring to keep him waiting any longer, hurried down the stairs, her hair streaming about her shoulders and her face bathed in tears. She threw herself on the floor at his feet and begged for mercy.

"There is no use in your pleading," said Bluebeard; "you must certainly die."

Then, seizing her by the hair with his left hand, he raised his scimitar, preparing to strike off her head. The poor woman turned her

eyes upon him and begged for a single moment to collect her thoughts.

"No," he said; "not a moment more. Commend yourself to God."

He raised his arm to strike. Just at that moment there was a loud knocking at the gate, and Bluebeard stopped short in his bloody work. Two officers in uniform sprang into the castle and ran upon Bluebeard with drawn swords. The cruel man, seeing they were his wife's brothers, tried to escape, but they followed and overtook him before he had gone twenty steps. Though he begged for mercy they listened not to a single word, but thrust him through and through with their swords.

The poor wife, who was almost as dead as her lord, could hardly rise to greet her brothers, but when she learned of Bluebeard's death she quickly recovered and embraced them heartily.

Bluebeard, it was found, had no heirs, and so all of his riches came into the possession of his wife. She was filled with thankfulness at her rescue, and in repentance for her curiosity she gave her sister a generous portion of her money, and established her brothers in high positions in the army.

As for herself, she afterwards married a worthy gentleman and lived happily to a hale old age. The beautiful town and country houses were constantly filled with guests, who, after they had convinced themselves that the cruel master was actually dead, made the rooms ring with their joyous laughter and talking.

THE GOOD-NIGHT PRAYER

LULLABY

Come hither, little restless one,
'Tis time to shut your eyes;
The sun behind the hills has gone,
The stars are in the skies.

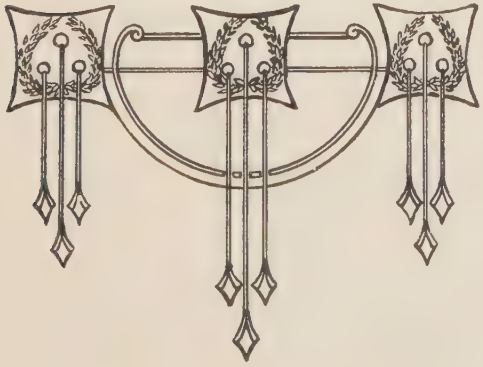
See, one by one they show their light—
How clear and bright they look!
Just like the fireflies in the night,
That shine beside the brook.

You do not hear the robins sing—
  They're snug within their nest;
And sheltered by their mother's wing,
  The little chickens rest.

The dog, he will not frolic now,
  But to his kennel creeps;
The turkeys climb upon the bough,
  And e'en the kitten sleeps.

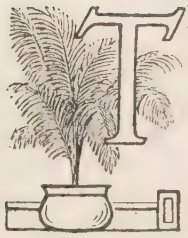
The very violets in their bed
  Fold up their eyelids blue,
And you, my flower, must droop your head
  And close your eyelids, too.

Then join your little hands and pray
  To God, who made the light,
To keep you holy all the day
  And guard you through the night.



RUMPELSTILTZKIN

JAKOB AND WILHELM GRIMM



THERE was once upon a time a poor miller who had a beautiful daughter. It happened one day that he had an audience with the King, and in order to appear important he told the King that he had a daughter who could spin straw into gold.

"Now that's a talent worth having," said the King to the miller; "if your daughter is as clever as you say, bring her to my palace tomorrow, and I'll test her."

When the girl was brought to him, he led her into a room full of straw, gave her a spinning-wheel and spindle, and said, "Now set to work and spin all night, and if by early dawn you haven't spun the straw into gold you shall die." Then he closed the door behind him and left her alone inside.

So the poor miller's daughter sat down. She hadn't the least idea of how to spin straw into gold, and at last she began to cry. Suddenly the door opened, and in stepped a tiny little man who said: "Good evening, Miss Miller-maid; why are you crying so bitterly?"

"Oh!" answered the girl, "I have to spin straw into gold, and haven't the slightest notion how it's done."

"What will you give me if I spin it for you?" asked the manikin.

"My necklace," replied the girl.

The little man took the necklace, sat down at the wheel, and whir, whir, whir, round it went until morning, when all the straw was spun away, and all the bobbins were full of gold.

As soon as the sun rose, the King came, and when he saw the gold he was astonished and delighted, but he wanted more of the precious metal. He had the miller's daughter put into another room, much bigger than the first and full of straw, and bade her, if she valued her life, spin it all into gold before morning.

When the girl began to cry the tiny little man appeared again and said: "What'll you give me if I spin the straw into gold for you?"

"The ring from my finger," answered the girl. The manikin took the ring, and when morning broke he had spun all the straw into glittering gold.

The King was pleased beyond measure at the sight, but he was still not satisfied, and he had the miller's daughter brought into a yet bigger room full of straw, and said:

"You must spin all this away in the night; but if you succeed this time you shall become my wife."

When the girl was alone, the little man appeared for the third time, and said: "What'll you give me if I spin the straw for you this third time?"

"I've nothing more to give," answered the girl.

"Then promise me when you are Queen to give me your first child."

Seeing no other way out of it, she promised the manikin, and he set to work.

When the King came in the morning, and found the gold, he straightway made her his wife. When a beautiful son was born to her, she did not think of the little man, till all of a sudden one day he stepped into her room and said: "Now give me what you promised."

The Queen offered the little man all the riches in her kingdom if he would only leave her the child. But the manikin said, "No, a living creature is dearer to me than all the treasures in the world."

Then the Queen began to cry and sob so bitterly that the little man was sorry for her, and said, "I'll give you three days, and if in that time you guess my name, you may keep your child."

The Queen pondered the whole night over all the names she had ever heard, and sent messengers to scour the land, and to pick up far and near any names they should come across. When the little man arrived she began with Kasper, Melchior, Belshazzer, Sheepshanks, Cruickshanks, Spindleshanks, and so on through the long list. At every name the little man shook his head.

At last a messenger reported, "As I came upon a high hill round the corner of the wood, where the foxes and hares bid each other good-night. I

saw a little house, and in front of the house burned a fire, and round the fire sprang the most grotesque little man, hopping on one leg and crying,

'Tomorrow I brew, today I bake,
And then the child away I'll take;
For little deems my royal dame
That Rumpelstiltzkin is my name!' "

When the little man stepped in afterward and asked his name she said, "Is your name Conrad?"

"No."

"Is your name, perhaps, Rumpelstiltzkin?"

"Some demon has told you that, some demon has told you that," screamed the little man, as he vanished into the air.

MERCY TO ANIMALS

WILLIAM COWPER

I would not enter on my list of friends
(Though graced with polished manners and fine sense,
Yet wanting sensibility) the man
Who needlessly sets foot upon a worm.
An inadvertent step may crush the snail
That crawls at evening in the public path;
But he that has humanity, forewarned,
Will tread aside, and let the reptile live.
The creeping vermin, loathsome to the sight,
And charged, perhaps, with venom, that intrudes,
A visitor unwelcome, into scenes
Sacred to neatness and repose, the alcove,
The chamber, or refectory, may die:

A necessary act incurs no blame.
Not so when, held within their proper bounds,
And guiltless of offence, they range the air,
Or take their pastime in the spacious field;
There they are privileged; and he that hunts
Or harms them there, is guilty of a wrong,
Disturbs the economy of Nature's realm,
Who, when she formed, designed them an abode.
The sum is this: If man's convenience, health,
Or safety interfere, his rights and claims
Are paramount, and must extinguish theirs.

THE REAPER AND THE FLOWERS

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

There is a Reaper, whose name is Death,
And, with his sickle keen,
He reaps the bearded grain at a breath,
And the flowers that grow between.

"Shall I have naught that is fair?" saith he;
"Have naught but the bearded grain?
Though the breath of these flowers is sweet to me,
I will give them all back again."

He gazed at the flowers with tearful eyes,
He kissed their drooping leaves;
It was for the Lord of Paradise
He bound them in his sheaves.

"My Lord has need of these flowerets gay,"
The Reaper said, and smiled;
"Dear tokens of the earth are they,
Where He was once a child.

AN ANGEL CAME

"They shall all bloom in fields of light,
Transplanted by my care,
And saints, upon their garments white
These sacred blossoms wear."

And the mother gave, in tears and pain,
The flowers she most did love;
She knew she should find them all again
In the fields of light above.

O, not in cruelty, not in wrath,
The Reaper came that day;
'Twas an angel visited the green earth,
And took the flowers away.

THE SANDS OF DEE

CHARLES KINGSLEY

"O Mary, go and call the cattle home,
And call the cattle home,
And call the cattle home,
Across the sands of Dee!"
The western wind was wild and dank wi' foam,
And all alone went she.

The western tide crept up along the sand,
And o'er and o'er the sand,
And round and round the sand,
As far as eye could see.
The rolling mist came down and hid the land—
And never home came she.

"Oh! is it weed, or fish, or floating hair—
A tress o' golden hair,
A drownéd maiden's hair
Above the nets at sea?
Was never salmon yet that shone so fair
Among the stakes on Dee."

They row'd her in across the rolling foam,
The cruel crawling foam,
The cruel hungry foam,
To her grave beside the sea;
But still the boatmen hear her call the cattle home
Across the sands of Dee!

THE UGLY DUCKLING

HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN

IT was glorious out in the country. It was summer, and the cornfields were yellow, and the oats were green; the hay had been put up in stacks in the green meadows, and the stork went about on his long red legs, and chattered Egyptian, for this was the language he had learned from his good mother. All around the fields and meadows were great forests, and in the midst of these forests lay deep lakes. Yes, it was really glorious out in the country.

In the midst of the sunshine there lay an old farm, surrounded by deep canals, and from the wall down to the water grew great burdocks, so high that little children could stand upright under the loftiest of them. It was just as wild there as in the deepest wood. Here sat a Duck upon her nest, for she had to hatch her young ones; but she was almost tired out before the little ones came; and then she so seldom had visitors. The other ducks liked better to swim about in the canals than to run up to sit down under a burdock, and cackle with her.

At last one eggshell after another burst open. "Peep! peep!" it cried, and in all the eggs there were little creatures that stuck out their heads.

"Quack! quack!" they said; and they all

came quacking out as fast as they could, looking all round them under the green leaves; and the mother let them look as much as they chose, for green is good for the eyes.

"How wide the world is!" said the young ones, for they certainly had much more room now than when they were in the eggs.

"Do you think this is all the world?" asked the mother. "That extends far across the other side of the garden, quite into the parson's field, but I have never been there yet. I hope you are all together," she continued, and stood up. "No, I have not all. The largest egg still lies there. How long is that to last? I am really tired of it." And she sat down again.

"Well, how goes it?" asked an old Duck who had come to pay her a visit.

"It takes a long time for that one egg," said the Duck who sat there. "It will not burst. Now, only look at the others; are they not the prettiest ducks one could possibly see? They are all like their father; the bad fellow never comes to see me."

"Let me see the egg which will not burst," said the old visitor. "Believe me, it is a turkey's egg. I was once cheated in that way, and had much anxiety and trouble with the young ones, for they were afraid of the water. I could not get them to venture in. I quacked and clucked, but it was of no use. Let me see the egg. Yes, that's a turkey's egg! Let it lie there, and you teach the other children to swim."

"I think I will sit on it a little longer," said

the Duck. "I've sat so long now that I can sit a few days more."

"Just as you please," said the old Duck; and she went away.

At last the great egg burst. "Peep! peep!" said the little one, and crept forth. It was very large and very ugly. The Duck looked at it.

"It's a very large duckling," said she; "none of the others look like that; can it really be a turkey chick? Now we shall soon find out. It must go into the water, even if I have to thrust it in myself."

The next day the weather was splendidly bright, and the sun shone on all the green trees. The Mother-Duck went down to the water with all her little ones. Splash! she jumped into the water. "Quack! quack!" she said, and then one duckling after another plunged in. The water closed over their heads, but they came up in an instant, and swam capitally; their legs went of themselves, and there they were, all in the water. The ugly gray Duckling swam with them.

"No, it's not a turkey," said she; "look how well it can use its legs, and how upright it holds itself. It is my own child! On the whole it's quite pretty, if one looks at it rightly. Quack! quack! come with me, and I'll lead you out into the great world, and present you in the poultry yard; but keep close to me, so that no one may tread on you; and take care of the cats!"

And so they came into the poultry yard. There was a terrible riot going on in there, for

two families were quarreling about an eel's head, and the cat got it after all.

"See, that's how it goes in the world!" said the Mother-Duck; and she whetted her beak, for she, too, wanted the eel's head. "Only use your legs," she said. "See that you bustle about, and bow your heads before the old Duck yonder. She's the grandest of all here; she's of Spanish blood—that's why she's so fat; and do you see, she has a red rag round her leg; that's something particularly fine, and the greatest distinction a duck can enjoy; it signifies that one does not want to lose her, and that she's to be recognized by man and beast. Shake yourselves—don't turn in your toes; a well-brought-up duck turns its toes quite out, just like father and mother, so! Now bend your necks and say 'Quack!' "

And they did so; but the other ducks round about looked at them, and said quite boldly:

"Look there! now we're to have these hanging on, as if there were not enough of us already! And—fie—! how that Duckling yonder looks; we won't stand that!" And one duck flew up immediately, and bit it in the neck.

"Let it alone," said the mother; "it does no harm to any one."

"Yes, but it's too large and peculiar," said the Duck who had bitten it; "and therefore it must be disciplined."

"Those are pretty children that the mother has there," said the old Duck with the rag round her leg. "They're all pretty but that

IN THE POULTRY YARD

one; that was a failure. I wish she could alter it."

"That cannot be done, my lady," replied the Mother-Duck. "It is not pretty, but it has a really good disposition, and swims as well as any other; I may even say it swims better. I think it will grow up pretty, and become smaller in time; it has lain too long in the egg, and therefore is not properly shaped." And then she pinched it in the neck, and smoothed its feathers. "Moreover, it is a drake," she said, "and therefore it is not of so much con-

sequence. I think he will be very strong; he makes his way already."

"The other ducklings are graceful enough," said the old Duck. "Make yourself at home: and if you find an eel's head, you may bring it to me."

And now they were at home. But the poor Duckling which had crept last out of the egg, and looked so ugly, was bitten, pushed, and jeered at, as much by the ducks as by the chickens.

"It is too big!" they all said. And the turkey cock, who had been born with spurs, and therefore thought himself an emperor, blew himself up like a ship in full sail, and bore straight down upon it; then he gobbled, and grew quite red in the face. The poor Duckling did not know where he should stand or walk; he was quite sad because he looked ugly and was scoffed at by the whole yard.

So it went on the first day; and afterward it became worse and worse. The poor Duckling was hunted about by every one; even his brothers and sisters were quite angry with him, and said, "If the cat would only catch you, you ugly creature!" And the mother said, "If you were only far away!" And the ducks bit him, and the chickens beat him, and the girl who had to feed the poultry kicked at him with her foot.

Then he ran and flew over the fence, and the little birds in the bushes flew up in fear.

"That is because I am so ugly!" thought the Duckling; and he shut his eyes, but flew no

farther; thus he came out into the great marsh, where the wild ducks lived. Here he lay the whole night long, and he was weary and downcast.

Toward morning the wild ducks flew up, and looked at their new companion.

"What sort of a one are you?" they asked; and the Duckling turned in every direction, and bowed as well as he could. "You are remarkably ugly!" said the wild ducks. "But that makes no difference to us, so long as you do not marry into our family."

Poor thing! He certainly did not think of marrying, and only hoped to obtain leave to lie among the reeds and drink some of the swamp water.

Thus he lay two whole days; then came thither two wild geese, or, properly speaking, two wild ganders. It was not long since each had crept out of an egg, and that's why they were so saucy.

"Listen, comrade," said one of them. "You're so ugly that I like you. Will you go with us, and become a bird of passage? Near here, in another marsh, there are a few lovely wild geese, all unmarried, and all able to say 'Honk!' You've a chance of making your fortune, ugly as you are!"

"Crack! crack!" resounded through the air; and the two ganders fell down dead in the swamp, and the water became blood-red. "Crack! bang!" it sounded again, and whole flocks of wild geese rose up from the reeds.

And then there was another report. A great hunt was going on. The hunters were lying in wait all round the marsh, and some were even sitting up in the branches of the trees, which spread far over the reeds. The blue smoke rose up like clouds among the dark trees, and was wafted far away across the water; and the hunting dogs came—splash, splash!—into the swamp, and the rushes and the reeds bent down on every side.

That was a fright for the poor Duckling! He turned his head, and put it under his wing; but at that moment a frightful great dog stood close by the Duckling. His tongue hung far out of his mouth, and his eyes gleamed horrible and ugly; he thrust out his nose close against the Duckling, showed his sharp teeth, and—splash, splash!—on he went without seizing him.

"Oh, Heaven be thanked!" sighed the Duckling. "I am so ugly that even the dog does not like to bite me!"

And so he lay quite quiet, while the shots rattled through the reeds, and gun after gun was fired. At last, late in the day, silence was restored; but the poor Duckling did not dare to rise up; he waited several hours before he looked round, and then hastened away out of the marsh as fast as he could. He ran on over field and meadow; there was such a storm raging that it was difficult to get from one place to another.

Toward evening the Duck came to a little, miserable peasant's hut. This hut was so

dilapidated that it did not know on which side it should fall; and that's why it remained standing. The storm whistled round the Duckling in such a way that the poor creature was obliged to sit down, and the tempest grew worse and worse. Then the Duckling noticed that one of the hinges of the door had given way, and the door hung so slanting that the Duckling could slip through the crack into the room; and he did so.

Here lived a woman, with her Cat and her Hen. And the Cat, whom she called Little Son, could arch his back and purr, and could even give out sparks; but for that, one had to stroke his fur the wrong way. The Hen had quite little, short legs, and therefore she was called Chickabiddy-Shortlegs. She laid good eggs, and the woman loved her as her own child.

In the morning the strange Duckling was at once noticed, and the Cat began to purr, and the Hen to cluck.

"What's this?" said the woman, and looked all round; but she could not see well, and therefore she thought the Duckling was a fat duck that had strayed. "This is a rare prize," she said. "Now I shall have duck's eggs. I hope it is not a drake. We must try that."

And so the Duckling was admitted on trial for three weeks; but no eggs came. And the Cat was master of the house, and the Hen was the lady, and they always said "We and the world!" for they thought they were half the world, and by far the better half. The Duckling

IN THE OLD WOMAN'S HOUSE

thought one might have a different opinion, but the Hen would not allow it.

"Can you lay eggs?" she asked.

"No."

"Then you'll have the goodness to hold your tongue."

And the Cat said, "Can you curve your back, and purr, and give out sparks?"

"No."

"Then please keep still when sensible people are speaking."

And the Duckling sat in a corner and was melancholy; then the fresh air and the sunshine streamed in; and he was seized with such a strange longing to swim on the water, that he could not help telling the Hen of it.

"What are you thinking of?" cried the Hen. "You have nothing to do, that's why you have these fancies. Purr or lay eggs, and they will pass over."

"But it is so charming to swim on the water!" said the Duckling; "so refreshing to let it close over one's head, and to dive down to the bottom."

"Yes, that must be a mighty pleasure, truly," quoth the Hen. "I fancy you must have gone crazy. Ask the Cat about it—he's the cleverest animal I know—ask him if he likes to swim on the water, or to dive down; I won't speak about myself. Ask our mistress, the old woman; no one in the world is cleverer than she. Do you think she has any desire to swim, and to let the water close over her head?"

"You don't understand me," said the Duckling.

"We don't understand you? Then pray, who is to understand you? You surely don't pretend to be cleverer than the Cat and the old woman—I won't say anything of myself. Don't be conceited, child, and be grateful for all the kindness you have received. Did you not get into a warm room, and have you not fallen into company from which you may learn something?

But you are a chatterer, and it is not pleasant to associate with you. You may believe me, I speak for your good. I tell you disagreeable things, and by that one may always know one's true friends. Only take care that you learn to lay eggs, or to purr and give out sparks!"

"I think I will go out into the wide world," said the Duckling.

"Yes, do go," replied the Hen.

And the Duckling went away. He swam on the water, and dived, but he was slighted by every creature because of his ugliness.

Now came the autumn. The leaves in the forest turned yellow and brown; the wind caught them so that they danced about, and up in the air it was very cold. The clouds hung low, heavy with hail and snowflakes, and on the fence stood the raven, crying "Croak! croak!" for mere cold. Yes, it is enough to make one feel cold to think of this. The poor little Duckling certainly had a sorry time.

One evening—the sun was just setting in his beauty—there came a whole flock of great, handsome birds out of the bushes; they were dazzlingly white, with long flexible necks and shining feathers; they were swans. They uttered a peculiar cry, spread forth their glorious wings, and flew away from that cold region to warmer lands, to fair open lakes. They mounted so high, so high!

The ugly little Duckling felt quite strange as he watched them. He turned round and round in the water like a wheel, stretched out his neck

toward them, and uttered such a strange, loud cry that he was frightened at himself, for he had never made such a sound before.

Oh! he could not forget those beautiful, happy birds; and as soon as he could see them no longer, he dived down to the very bottom, and when he came up again he was quite beside himself. He knew not the name of those birds, and knew not whither they were flying; but he loved them more than he had ever loved any one. He was not at all envious of them. How could he think of wishing to possess such loveliness as they had? He would have been glad if only the ducks would have endured his company—the poor, ugly creature!

And the winter came in earnest. It grew colder and colder. The Duckling was forced to swim about in the water, to prevent the surface from freezing entirely; but every night the hole in which he swam about became smaller and smaller. The Duckling was obliged to use his legs continually to prevent the hole from freezing up. At last he became exhausted, and lay quite still, and thus froze fast into the ice.

Early in the morning a peasant came by, and when he saw what had happened, he took his wooden shoe, broke the ice crust to pieces, and carried the Duckling home to his wife. The warm room soon brought him to again, and the children wanted to play with him.

The Duckling thought they would hurt him, and in his terror fluttered up into the milk-pan, so that the milk spurted down into the room.

The woman clapped her hands, at which the Duckling flew down into the butter-tub, and then into the meal-barrel and out again. How he looked then!

The woman screamed and struck at him with the fire-tongs; the children tumbled over one another in their efforts to catch the Duckling, and they laughed till they cried! Happily, the door stood open, and the poor creature was able to slip out between the shrubs into the newly-fallen snow; and there he lay quite exhausted.

But it would be too sad if I were to tell all the misery and care which the Duckling had to endure in the hard winter. He lay out on the moor among the reeds, when the sun began to shine again and the larks to sing; it was a beautiful spring.

Then all at once the Duckling could flap his wings; they beat the air more strongly than before, and bore him quickly away; and before he well knew how all this had happened, he found himself in a great garden, where the elder trees smelt sweet, and bent their long green branches down to the canal that wound through the park.

Oh, here it was so beautiful, such a gladness of spring! and from the thicket came three glorious white swans that rustled their wings, and swam lightly on the water. The Duckling knew the splendid creatures, and felt oppressed by a peculiar sadness.

"I will fly away to them, to the royal birds! and they will kill me, because I, that am so

ugly, dare to approach them. But it is of no consequence! Better to be killed by *them* than to be pursued by ducks, and beaten by fowls, and pushed about by the girl who takes care of the poultry yard, and to suffer hunger in winter!"

And he flew out into the water, and swam toward the beautiful swans, who looked at him and came sailing down upon him with outspread wings.

"Kill me!" said the poor creature, and bent his head down upon the water, expecting nothing but death. But what was this that he saw in the clear water? He beheld his own image—and, lo! he was no longer a clumsy, dark-gray bird, ugly and hateful to look at, but—a beautiful, white swan!

It matters nothing if one is born in a duck yard, if one can only be hatched from a swan's egg!

He felt quite contented after all the misfortunes he had suffered, now that he realized his happiness in all the splendor that surrounded him. And the great swans swam round him, and stroked him with their beaks.

Into the garden came little children, who threw bread and corn into the water.

The youngest cried, "There is a new one!" and the other children shouted joyously, "Yes, a new one has arrived!"

They clapped their hands and danced about, and ran to their father and mother; and bread and cake were thrown into the water.

"The new one is the most beautiful of all! so

"THE NEW ONE IS MOST BEAUTIFUL!"

young and handsome!" they said in chorus.

And the old swans bowed their heads before him!

Then he felt quite humble, and hid his head under his wing, for he had suffered too much to be proud. He did not know what to do; he was so happy and contented. He thought how he had been persecuted and despised; and now he heard them saying that he was the most beautiful of all the birds. Even the elder tree bent its branches straight down into the water

before him, and the sun shone warm and mild. Then his wings rustled, he lifted his slender neck, and cried rejoicingly from the depths of his heart:

"I never dreamed of so much happiness when I was still that Ugly Duckling!"

This is one of the finest little stories that Hans Christian Andersen ever wrote, and no man ever wrote better stories for children. This is so good that we ought to be glad to read it more than once and see if we cannot find in it something new every time we read it.

In the first place, we are very much interested in the Ugly Duckling himself, his sorrowful childhood, his sufferings in winter, and the glorious end of everything; but unless we stop to think we do not realize how very much like one of ourselves the great Danish story-teller has made his Ugly Duckling, or how much like human beings are the characters in the story.

Does not the Ugly Duckling seem to feel as an awkward boy does when people talk about his big hands, his clumsy feet or his red hair?

Is it not just like a human mother to say, "Look how well he can use his legs, and how upright he holds his head. He is my own child. On the whole he is quite pretty if one looks at it rightly."

Perhaps you have seen people like Little Son or Chickabiddy-Shortlegs who were so very proud because they could do some one thing well that they made themselves disagreeable to

everybody else. It is not manly to think that the thing one can do very well is the only thing that is worth doing. Everybody can do something well, and something that is very important, too. This is just what Little Son and Chicka-biddy-Shortlegs did not understand.

Do you notice that the reason the Ugly Duckling was not proud when he found he was a white swan was that he had suffered so much when he was little? We cannot always see that our troubles make us better and really turn out in the end to be great blessings.

But then again, the birds and animals are not entirely human. They show their own natures very clearly.

The turkey cock swells up and struts around, just as such birds always do. The hunting dog will not touch the bird it is not trained to bring back to its master, and the cat arches her back and purrs just as cats always do when they are feeling good.

In every flock of fowls there is one leader, and every time new chickens or ducks come into the flock they are looked at and approved, or picked at and mistreated, just as are the old Duck's little brood.

Perhaps the best thing in the whole story is the conclusion that, after all, "it matters nothing if one is born in a duck yard if one can only be hatched from a swan's egg."

It seems a very good conclusion to make, for no matter where a person was born, or how poor he is, there is always a great deal of the swan in

him if he only takes care to find it, and he can make himself strong, fine-looking and noble if he remembers that fact.

If you have time, and wish to study the story more, you can find the answers to the following questions written in the story, or you can think what the answers may be and talk to your parents or your older brothers and sisters about them:

1. How did the Duck find out that her ugly child was not a turkey?

2. What does the Mother-Duck mean when she says, "That is how it goes in the world"?

3. Why does the Mother-Duck think that because he is a drake the Ugly Duckling's looks are of no consequence?

4. Why did the dog's tongue hang out of his mouth?

5. What was the reason that the old woman's house did not fall down?

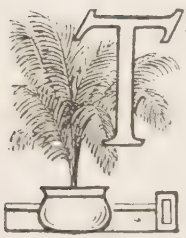
6. What advice did Little Son give the Ugly Duckling?

7. Are the birds prettier in the early summer than they are in the winter? Do they change their color? Is an old bird sometimes colored differently from a young one? Do you know the bobolink? Did you ever see him in winter when he is in the southern states, and in summer in the north when his wife is nesting?

8. Do you suppose the elder tree really bent its branches straight down into the water?

9. Do you think that the way to know one's true friends is by the disagreeable things they say?

THE MIRROR OF MATSUYANA



THE following pretty little story comes from Japan, where it may be found in a collection of tales for children.

A long time ago a young couple lived in the country with their only child, a beautiful little girl whom they loved tenderly. The names of the parents cannot be told now, for they have long been forgotten, but we know that the place where they lived was Matsuyana, in the province of Echigo.

Now it happened when the child was still very little that her father was obliged to go to the capital of the kingdom. As it was so long a journey, neither his wife nor his child could go with him, and he departed alone, promising to bring them many pretty gifts on his return.

The mother had never been away from the neighborhood and was not able to get rid of some fear when she thought of the long journey her husband must take. At the same time, however, she could not but feel pride and satisfaction that it was her husband who was the first man in all that region to go to the rich city where the king and the nobles lived, and where there were so many beautiful and marvelous things to be seen.

At last, when the good wife knew that her

husband would return, she dressed her child gaily in the best clothes she had and herself in the blue dress that she knew he liked very much.

It is not possible to describe the joy of the good woman when she saw her husband return safe and sound. The little one clapped her hands and laughed with delight when she saw the toys her father had brought, and he never tired of telling of the wonderful things he had seen on his journey and at the capital.

"To you," he said to his wife, "I have brought a thing of wonderful power, that is called a mirror. Look and tell me what you see inside." He handed her a little flat box of white wood, and when she opened it she saw a metal disk. One side was white as frosted silver and ornamented with birds and flowers raised from the surface; the other side was shining and polished like a window-pane. Into this the young wife gazed with pleasure and astonishment, for from the depths she saw looking out at her a smiling face with parted lips and animated eyes.

"What do you see?" repeated the husband, charmed by her amazement and proud to prove that he had remembered her in his absence.

"I see a pretty young woman, who looks at me and moves her lips as if talking, and who wears—what a wonderful thing! a blue dress exactly like mine."

"Silly one! What you see is your own sweet face," replied the man, delighted to know that his wife did not recognize herself. "This circle of metal is called a looking-glass. In the city,

SHE OPENED IT AND SAW A METAL DISK

every woman has one, although here in the country no one has seen one until to-day."

Enchanted with her gift, the woman passed several days in wonderment, because, as I have said, this was the first time she had seen a mirror, and consequently the first time she had seen the image of her own pretty face. This wonderful jewel she thought too precious to be used every day, and the little box she guarded carefully, concealing it among her most precious treasures.

Years passed, the good man and his wife living happily through them all. The delight of his life was the child, who was growing into the living

image of her dear mother, and who was so good and affectionate that everybody loved her.

The mother, remembering her own passing vanity over her beauty, kept the mirror hidden, to protect her daughter from any chance of vanity. As for the father, no one had spoken of the glass, and he had forgotten all about it. Thus the child grew up frank and guileless as her mother wished, knowing nothing of her own beauty or what the mirror might reflect.

But there came a day of terrible misfortune to this family, till then so happy. The devoted and loving mother fell sick, and although her daughter watched her with affectionate and tender devotion, the dear woman grew worse and worse each day, until there was no hope of her recovery.

When she knew that she must soon pass away, she was very sad, grieving for husband and daughter that she must leave behind on earth; and especially was she anxious for the future of her loving daughter. Calling the girl to the bedside, she said:

"My beloved child, you see that I am so very sick that soon I must die and leave you and your father alone. Promise me that when I am gone, every morning when you get up and every night when you go to bed, you will look into the mirror which your father gave me long ago. In it you will see me smiling back at you, and you will know that I am ever near to protect you."

Having spoken these words, she pointed to the place where the mirror was hidden, and the

girl, with tears on her cheeks, promised to do as her mother wished. Tranquil and resigned, the mother then passed quickly away.

The dutiful daughter, never forgetting her mother's wishes, each morning and evening took the glass from the place where it was hidden and gazed at it intently for a long time. There she saw the face of her dead mother brilliant and smiling, not pallid and ill as it was in her last days, but young and beautiful. To this vision each night she confided the troubles and little faults of the day, looking to it for help and encouragement in doing her duty.

In this manner the girl grew up as though watched over and helped by a living presence, trying always to do nothing that could grieve or annoy her sainted mother. Her greatest pleasure was to look into the mirror and feel that she could truthfully say:

"Mother, to-day I have been as you wished that I should be."

After a time the father observed that his daughter looked lovingly into the mirror every morning and every evening, and appeared to converse with it. Wondering, he asked her the cause of her strange behavior. The girl replied:

"Father, I look every day into the glass to see my dear mother and to speak with her."

She then related to him the last wishes of her dying mother, and assured him that she had never failed to comply with them.

Wondering at such simplicity and loving

HER GREATEST PLEASURE WAS TO LOOK INTO THE MIRROR

obedience, the father shed tears of pity and affection. Nor did he ever find the heart to explain to the loving daughter that the image she saw in the mirror was but the reflection of her own beautiful face. Thus, by the pure white bond of her filial love, each day the charming girl grew more and more like her dead mother.

YEARNING LOVE

A CONTRAST

Light blue eyes;
  Flaxen hair;
Rosy cheeks—
  Dimples there!
    These are Baby's.

Pudgy fists;
  Ruddy toes;
Kissy lips—
  Mother knows!
    These are Baby's.

Cooing voice;
  Winning smiles;
Pleading arms—
  Wanton wiles!
    These are Baby's.

Yearning love;
  Growing fears;
Grief and worry—
  All the years.
    These are Mother's.

THE GOLDEN TOUCH

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE

ONCE upon a time there lived a very rich man, and a king besides, whose name was Midas; and he had a little daughter whom nobody but myself ever heard of, and whose name I either never knew or have entirely forgotten. So, because I love odd names for little girls, I choose to call her Marygold.

This King Midas was fonder of gold than of anything else in the world. He valued his royal crown chiefly because it was composed of that precious metal. If he loved anything better or half so well, it was the one little maiden who played so merrily around her father's footstool. But the more Midas loved his daughter, the more did he desire and seek for wealth. He thought, foolish man! that the best thing he could possibly do for this dear child would be to bequeath her the immensest pile of yellow, glistening coin that had ever been heaped together since the world was made. Thus he gave all his thoughts and all his time to this one purpose. If he ever happened to gaze for an instant at the gold-tinted clouds of sunset, he wished that they were real gold and that they could be squeezed safely into his strong box. When little Marygold ran to meet him with a

bunch of buttercups and dandelions, he used to say, "Pooh, pooh, child! If these flowers were as golden as they look, they would be worth the plucking!"

And yet in his earlier days, before he was so entirely possessed with this insane desire for riches, King Midas had shown a great taste for flowers. He had planted a garden in which grew the biggest and beautifulest and sweetest roses that any mortal ever saw or smelled. These roses were still growing in the garden, as large, as lovely, and as fragrant as when Midas used to pass whole hours in gazing at them and inhaling their perfume. But now, if he looked at them at all, it was only to calculate how much the garden would be worth if each of the innumerable rose-petals were a thin plate of gold. And though he once was fond of music (in spite of an idle story about his ears, which were said to resemble those of an ass), the only music for poor Midas now was the chink of one coin against another.

At length (as people always grow more and more foolish unless they take care to grow wiser and wiser) Midas had got to be so exceedingly unreasonable that he could scarcely bear to see or touch any object that was not gold. He made it his custom, therefore, to pass a large portion of every day in a dark and dreary apartment underground, at the basement of his palace. It was here that he kept his wealth. To this dismal hole—for it was little better than a dungeon—Midas betook himself whenever he

wanted to be particularly happy. Here, after carefully locking the door, he would take a bag of gold coin, or a gold cup as big as a wash-bowl, or a heavy golden bar, or a peck measure of gold dust, and bring it from the obscure corners of the room into the one bright and narrow sunbeam that fell from the dungeon-like window. He valued the sunbeam for no other reason but that his treasure would not shine without its help. And then would he reckon over the coins in the bag, toss up the bar and catch it as it came down, sift the gold dust through his fingers, look at the funny image of his own face as reflected in the burnished circumference of the cup, and whisper to himself, "O Midas, rich King Midas, what a happy man art thou!" But it was laughable to see how the image of his face kept grinning at him out of the polished surface of the cup. It seemed to be aware of his foolish behavior, and to have a naughty inclination to make fun of him.

Midas called himself a happy man, but felt that he was not yet quite so happy as he might be. The very tip-top of enjoyment would never be reached unless the whole world were to become his treasure-room and be filled with yellow metal which should be all his own.

Now, I need hardly remind such wise little people as you are that in the old, old times, when King Midas was alive, a great many things came to pass which we should consider wonderful if they were to happen in our own day and country. And, on the other hand, a great many things

THE FIGURE OF A STRANGER IN THE SUNBEAM

take place nowadays which seem not only wonderful to us, but at which the people of old times would have stared their eyes out. On the whole, I regard our own times as the stranger of the two; but, however that may be, I must go on with my story.

Midas was enjoying himself in his treasure-room one day as usual, when he perceived a shadow fall over the heaps of gold, and, looking suddenly up, what should he behold but the figure of a stranger standing in the bright and narrow sunbeam! It was a young man with a cheerful and ruddy face. Whether it was that the imagination of King Midas threw a yellow tinge over everything, or whatever the cause might be, he could not help fancying that the smile with which the stranger regarded him had a kind of golden radiance in it. Certainly, although his figure intercepted the sunshine, there was now a brighter gleam upon all the piled-up treasures than before. Even the remotest corners had their share of it, and were lighted up, when the stranger smiled, as with tips of flame and sparkles of fire.

As Midas knew that he had carefully turned the key in the lock, and that no mortal strength could possibly break into his treasure-room, he of course concluded that his visitor must be something more than mortal. It is no matter about telling you who he was. In those days, when the earth was comparatively a new affair, it was supposed to be often the resort of beings endowed with supernatural powers, who used to interest themselves in the joys and sorrows of men, women, and children half playfully and half seriously. Midas had met such beings before now, and was not sorry to meet one of them again. The stranger's aspect, indeed, was so good-humored and kindly, if not beneficent,

that it would have been unreasonable to suspect him of intending any mischief. It was far more probable that he came to do Midas a favor. And what could that favor be unless to multiply his heaps of treasure?

The stranger gazed about the room, and when his lustrous smile had glistened upon all the golden objects that were there, he turned again to Midas.

"You are a wealthy man, friend Midas," he observed. "I doubt whether any other four walls on earth contain so much gold as you have contrived to pile up in this room."

"I have done pretty well—pretty well," answered Midas in a discontented tone. "But, after all, it is but a trifle when you consider that it has taken me my whole life to get it together. If one could live a thousand years, he might have time to grow rich."

"What!" exclaimed the stranger. "Then you are not satisfied?"

Midas shook his head.

"And pray what would satisfy you?" asked the stranger. "Merely for the curiosity of the thing, I should be glad to know."

Midas paused and meditated. He felt a presentiment that this stranger, with such a golden luster in his good-humored smile, had come hither with both the power and the purpose of gratifying his utmost wishes. Now, therefore, was the fortunate moment when he had but to speak and obtain whatever possible or seemingly impossible thing it might come into his head to ask.

So he thought, and thought, and thought, and heaped up one golden mountain upon another in his imagination, without being able to imagine them big enough. At last a bright idea occurred to King Midas. It seemed really as bright as the glistening metal which he loved so much.

Raising his head, he looked the lustrous stranger in the face.

"Well, Midas," observed his visitor, "I see that you have at length hit upon something that will satisfy you. Tell me your wish."

"It is only this," replied Midas. "I am weary of collecting my treasures with so much trouble, and beholding the heap so diminutive after I have done my best. I wish everything that I touch to be changed to gold."

The stranger's smile grew so very broad that it seemed to fill the room like an outburst of the sun gleaming into a shadowy dell where the yellow autumnal leaves—for so looked the lumps and particles of gold—lie strewn in the glow of light.

"The Golden Touch!" exclaimed he. "You certainly deserve credit, friend Midas, for striking out so brilliant a conception. But are you quite sure that this will satisfy you?"

"How could it fail?" said Midas.

"And will you never regret the possession of it?"

"What could induce me?" asked Midas. "I ask nothing else to render me perfectly happy."

"Be it as you wish, then," replied the stranger,

waving his hand in token of farewell. "To-morrow at sunrise you will find yourself gifted with the Golden Touch."

The figure of the stranger then became exceedingly bright, and Midas involuntarily closed his eyes. On opening them again he beheld only one yellow sunbeam in the room, and all around him the glistening of the precious metal which he had spent his life in hoarding up.

Whether Midas slept as usual that night the story does not say. Asleep or awake, however, his mind was probably in the state of a child's to whom a beautiful new plaything has been promised in the morning. At any rate, day had hardly peeped over the hills when King Midas was broad awake, and stretching his arms out of bed, began to touch the objects that were within reach. He was anxious to prove whether the Golden Touch had really come, according to the stranger's promise. So he laid his finger on a chair by the bedside and on various other things, but was grievously disappointed to perceive that they remained of exactly the same substance as before. Indeed, he felt very much afraid that he had only dreamed about the lustrous stranger, or else that the latter had been making game of him. And what a miserable affair would it be if, after all his hopes, Midas must content himself with what little gold he could scrape together by ordinary means instead of creating it by a touch.

All this while it was only the gray of the

morning, with but a streak of brightness along the edge of the sky, where Midas could not see it. He lay in a very disconsolate mood, regretting the downfall of his hopes, and kept growing sadder and sadder until the earliest sunbeam shone through the window and gilded the ceiling over his head. It seemed to Midas that this bright yellow sunbeam was reflected in rather a singular way on the white covering of the bed. Looking more closely, what was his astonishment and delight when he found that this linen fabric had been transmuted to what seemed a woven texture of the purest and brightest gold! The Golden Touch had come to him with the first sunbeam!

Midas started up in a kind of joyful frenzy, and ran about the room grasping at everything that happened to be in his way. He seized one of the bedposts, and it became immediately a fluted golden pillar. He pulled aside a window-curtain in order to admit a clear spectacle of the wonders which he was performing, and the tassel grew heavy in his hand—a mass of gold. He took up a book from the table. At his first touch it assumed the appearance of such a splendidly bound and gilt-edged volume as one often meets with nowadays, but on running his fingers through the leaves, behold! it was a bundle of thin golden plates, in which all the wisdom of the book had grown illegible. He hurriedly put on his clothes, and was enraptured to see himself in a magnificent suit of gold cloth, which retained its flexibility and softness,

although it burdened him a little with its weight. He drew out his handkerchief, which little Marygold had hemmed for him. That was likewise gold, with the dear child's neat and pretty stitches running all along the border in gold thread!

Somehow or other, this last transformation did not quite please King Midas. He would rather that his little daughter's handiwork should have remained just the same as when she climbed his knee and put it into his hand.

But it was not worth while to vex himself about a trifle. Midas now took his spectacles from his pocket, and put them on his nose in order that he might see more distinctly what he was about. In those days spectacles for common people had not been invented, but were already worn by kings, else how could Midas have had any? To his great perplexity, however, excellent as the glasses were, he discovered that he could not possibly see through them. But this was the most natural thing in the world, for on taking them off the transparent crystals turned out to be plates of yellow metal, and of course were worthless as spectacles, though valuable as gold. It struck Midas as rather inconvenient that, with all his wealth, he could never again be rich enough to own a pair of serviceable spectacles.

"It is no great matter, nevertheless," said he to himself, very philosophically. "We cannot expect any great good without its being accompanied with some small inconvenience. The

Golden Touch is worth the sacrifice of a pair of spectacles at least, if not of one's very eyesight. My own eyes will serve for ordinary purposes, and little Marygold will soon be old enough to read to me."

Wise King Midas was so exalted by his good fortune that the palace seemed not sufficiently spacious to contain him. He therefore went downstairs, and smiled on observing that the balustrade of the staircase became a bar of burnished gold as his hand passed over it in his descent.

He lifted the doorlatch (it was brass only a moment ago, but golden when his fingers quitted it) and emerged into the garden. Here, as it happened, he found a great number of beautiful roses in full bloom and others in all the stages of lovely bud and blossom. Very delicious was their fragrance in the morning breeze. Their delicate blush was one of the fairest sights in the world, so gentle, so modest, and so full of sweet tranquillity did these roses seem to be.

But Midas knew a way to make them far more precious, according to his way of thinking, than roses had ever been before. So he took great pains in going from bush to bush, and exercised his magic touch most indefatigably, until every individual flower and bud, and even the worms at the heart of some of them, were changed to gold. By the time this good work was completed, King Midas was summoned to breakfast, and, as the morning air had given

him an excellent appetite, he made haste back to the palace.

What was usually a king's breakfast in the days of Midas I really do not know and cannot stop now to investigate. To the best of my belief, however, on this particular morning the breakfast consisted of hot cakes, some nice little brook trout, roasted potatoes, fresh boiled eggs, and coffee for King Midas himself, and a bowl of bread and milk for his daughter Marygold. At all events, this is a breakfast fit to set before a king, and, whether he had it or not, King Midas could not have had a better.

Little Marygold had not yet made her appearance. Her father ordered her to be called, and, seating himself at the table, awaited the child's coming in order to begin his own breakfast. To do Midas justice, he really loved his daughter, and loved her so much the more this morning on account of the good fortune which had befallen him. It was not a great while before he heard her coming along the passageway crying bitterly. This circumstance surprised him, because Marygold was one of the cheerfulest little people whom you would see in a summer's day, and hardly shed a thimbleful of tears in a twelvemonth. When Midas heard her sobs he determined to put little Marygold into better spirits by an agreeable surprise; so, leaning across the table, he touched his daughter's bowl (which was a china one with pretty figures all around it) and transmuted it to gleaming gold.

Meanwhile, Marygold slowly and disconso-

lately opened the door and showed herself with her apron at her eyes, still sobbing as if her heart would break.

"How now, my little lady!" cried Midas. "What is the matter with you this morning?"

Marygold, without taking the apron from her eyes, held out her hand, in which was one of the roses which Midas had so recently transmuted.

"Beautiful!" exclaimed her father. "And what is there in this magnificent golden rose to make you cry?"

"Ah, dear father!" answered the child, as well as her sobs would let her, "it is not beautiful, but the ugliest flower that ever grew. As soon as I was dressed I ran into the garden to gather some roses for you, because I know you like them, and like them the better when gathered by your little daughter. But—oh dear! dear me!—what do you think has happened? Such a misfortune! All the beautiful roses, that smelled so sweetly and had so many lovely blushes, are blighted and spoiled! They are grown quite yellow, as you see this one, and have no longer any fragrance. What can be the matter with them?"

"Pooh, my dear little girl! pray don't cry about it!" said Midas, who was ashamed to confess that he himself had wrought the change which so greatly afflicted her. "Sit down and eat your bread and milk. You will find it easy enough to exchange a golden rose like that, which will last hundreds of years, for an ordinary one, which would wither in a day."

"I don't care for such roses as this!" cried Marygold, tossing it contemptuously away. "It has no smell, and the hard petals prick my nose."

The child now sat down to table, but was so occupied with her grief for the blighted roses that she did not even notice the wonderful transmutation of her china bowl. Perhaps this was all the better, for Marygold was accustomed to take pleasure in looking at the queer figures and strange trees and houses that were painted on the circumference of the bowl, and these ornaments were now entirely lost in the yellow hue of the metal.

Midas, meanwhile, had poured out a cup of coffee; and, as a matter of course, the coffeepot, whatever metal it may have been when he took it up, was gold when he set it down. He thought to himself that it was rather an extravagant style of splendor, in a king of his simple habits, to breakfast off a service of gold, and began to be puzzled with the difficulty of keeping his treasures safe. The cupboard and the kitchen would no longer be a secure place of deposit for articles so valuable as golden bowls and coffeepots.

Amid these thoughts he lifted a spoonful of coffee to his lips, and sipping it, was astonished to perceive that the instant his lips touched the liquid it became molten gold, and the next moment hardened into a lump.

"Ha!" exclaimed Midas, rather aghast.

"What is the matter, father?" asked little

Marygold, gazing at him with the tears still standing in her eyes.

"Nothing, child, nothing," said Midas. "Eat your milk before it gets quite cold."

He took one of the nice little trouts on his plate, and, by way of experiment, touched its tail with his finger. To his horror, it was immediately transmuted from an admirably fried brook trout into a gold fish, though not one of those gold fishes which people often keep in glass globes as ornaments for the parlor. No; but it was really a metallic fish, and looked as if it had been very cunningly made by the nicest goldsmith in the world. Its little bones were now golden wires, its fins and tail were thin plates of gold, and there were the marks of the fork in it, and all the delicate, frothy appearance of a nicely fried fish exactly imitated in metal. A very pretty piece of work, as you may suppose; only King Midas, just at that moment, would much rather have had a real trout in his dish than this elaborate and valuable imitation of one.

"I don't quite see," thought he to himself, "how I am to get any breakfast."

He took one of the smoking hot cakes, and had scarcely broken it when, to his cruel mortification, though a moment before it had been of the whitest wheat, it assumed the yellow hue of Indian meal. To say the truth, if it had really been a hot Indian cake Midas would have prized it a good deal more than he now did, when its solidity and increased weight

made him too bitterly sensible that it was gold. Almost in despair, he helped himself to a boiled egg, which immediately underwent a change similar to those of the trout and the cake. The egg, indeed, might have been mistaken for one of those which the famous goose in the story-book was in the habit of laying; but King Midas was the only goose that had had anything to do with the matter.

"Well, this is a quandary!" thought he, leaning back in his chair and looking quite enviously at little Marygold, who was now eating her bread and milk with great satisfaction. "Such a costly breakfast before me, and nothing that can be eaten!"

Hoping that, by dint of great dispatch, he might avoid what he now felt to be a considerable inconvenience, King Midas next snatched a hot potato, and attempted to cram it into his mouth and swallow it in a hurry. But the Golden Touch was too nimble for him. He found his mouth full, not of mealy potato, but of solid metal, which so burned his tongue that he roared aloud, and, jumping up from the table, began to dance and stamp about the room both with pain and affright.

"Father, dear father!" cried little Marygold, who was a very affectionate child, "pray what is the matter? Have you burned your mouth?"

"Ah, dear child," groaned Midas dolefully, "I don't know what is to become of your poor father."

And truly, my dear little folks, did you ever

hear of such a pitiable case in all your lives? Here was literally the richest breakfast that could be set before a king, and its very richness made it absolutely good for nothing. The poorest laborer sitting down to his crust of bread and cup of water was far better off than King Midas, whose delicate food was really worth its weight in gold. And what was to be done? Already, at breakfast, Midas was excessively hungry. Would he be less so by dinner-time? And how ravenous would be his appetite for supper, which must undoubtedly consist of the same sort of indigestible dishes as those now before him! How many days, think you, would he survive a continuance of this rich fare?

These reflections so troubled wise King Midas that he began to doubt whether, after all, riches are the one desirable thing in the world, or even the most desirable. But this was only a passing thought. So fascinated was Midas with the glitter of the yellow metal that he would still have refused to give up the Golden Touch for so paltry a consideration as a breakfast. Just imagine what a price for one meal's victuals! It would have been the same as paying millions and millions of money (and as many millions more as would take forever to reckon up) for some fried trout, an egg, a potato, a hot cake, and a cup of coffee.

"It would be quite too dear," thought Midas.

Nevertheless, so great was his hunger and the perplexity of his situation that he again groaned

aloud, and very grievously, too. Our pretty Marygold could endure it no longer. She sat a moment gazing at her father and trying with all the might of her little wits to find out what was the matter with him. Then, with a sweet and sorrowful impulse to comfort him, she started from her chair, and, running to Midas, threw her arms affectionately about his knees. He bent down and kissed her. He felt that his little daughter's love was worth a thousand times more than he had gained by the Golden Touch.

"My precious, precious Marygold!" cried he.

But Marygold made no answer.

Alas, what had he done? How fatal was the gift which the stranger bestowed! The moment the lips of Midas touched Marygold's forehead a change had taken place. Her sweet, rosy face, so full of affection as it had been, assumed a glittering yellow color, with yellow tear-drops congealing on her cheeks. Her beautiful brown ringlets took the same tint. Her soft and tender little form grew hard and inflexible within her father's encircling arms. Oh, terrible misfortune! The victim of his insatiable desire for wealth, little Marygold was a human child no longer, but a golden statue!

Yes, there she was, with the questioning look of love, grief, and pity hardened into her face. It was the prettiest and most woeful sight that ever mortal saw. All the features and tokens of Marygold were there; even the beloved little dimple remained in her golden chin. But, the

more perfect was this resemblance, the greater was the father's agony at beholding this golden image, which was all that was left him of a daughter. It had been a favorite phrase of Midas, whenever he felt particularly fond of the child, to say that she was worth her weight in gold. And now the phrase had become literally true. And now at last, when it was too late, he felt how infinitely a warm and tender heart that loved him exceeded in value all the wealth that could be piled up betwixt the earth and sky.

It would be too sad a story if I were to tell you how Midas, in the fullness of all his gratified desires, began to wring his hands and bemoan himself, and how he could neither bear to look at Marygold, nor yet to look away from her. Except when his eyes were fixed on the image, he could not possibly believe that she was changed to gold. But, stealing another glance, there was the precious little figure, with a yellow tear-drop on its yellow cheek, and a look so piteous and tender that it seemed as if that very expression must needs soften the gold and make it flesh again. This, however, could not be. So Midas had only to wring his hands and to wish that he were the poorest man in the wide world if the loss of all his wealth might bring back the faintest rose-color to his dear child's face.

While he was in this tumult of despair he suddenly beheld a stranger standing near the door. Midas bent down his head without speaking, for he recognized the same figure which had

MARYGOLD WAS A GOLDEN STATUE!

appeared to him the day before in the treasure-room and had bestowed on him this disastrous faculty of the Golden Touch. The stranger's countenance still wore a smile which seemed to shed a yellow luster all about the room, and gleamed on little Marygold's image and on the other objects that had been transmuted by the touch of Midas.

"Well, friend Midas," said the stranger, "pray how do you succeed with the Golden Touch?"

Midas shook his head.

"I am very miserable," said he.

"Very miserable, indeed!" exclaimed the stranger. "And how happens that? Have I not faithfully kept my promise with you? Have you not everything that your heart desired?"

"Gold is not everything," answered Midas, "and I have lost all that my heart really cared for."

"Ah! so you have made a discovery since yesterday?" observed the stranger. "Let us see, then. Which of these two things do you think is really worth the most—the gift of the Golden Touch, or one cup of clear, cold water?"

"Oh, blessed water!" exclaimed Midas. "It will never moisten my parched throat again."

"The Golden Touch," continued the stranger, "or a crust of bread?"

"A piece of bread," answered Midas, "is worth all the gold on earth."

"The Golden Touch," asked the stranger,

"or your own little Marygold, warm, soft, and loving, as she was an hour ago?"

"Oh, my child, my dear child!" cried poor Midas, wringing his hands. "I would not have given that one small dimple in her chin for the power of changing this whole big earth into a solid lump of gold!"

"You are wiser than you were, King Midas," said the stranger, looking seriously at him. "Your own heart, I perceive, has not been entirely changed from flesh to gold. Were it so, your case would indeed be desperate. But you appear to be still capable of understanding that the commonest things, such as lie within everybody's grasp, are more valuable than the riches which so many mortals sigh and struggle after. Tell me now, do you sincerely desire to rid yourself of this Golden Touch?"

"It is hateful to me!" replied Midas.

A fly settled on his nose, but immediately fell to the floor, for it, too, had become gold. Midas shuddered.

"Go, then," said the stranger, "and plunge into the river that glides past the bottom of your garden. Take likewise a vase of the same water, and sprinkle it over any object that you may desire to change back again from gold into its former substance. If you do this in earnestness and sincerity, it may possibly repair the mischief which your avarice has occasioned."

King Midas bowed low, and when he lifted his head the lustrous stranger had vanished.

You will easily believe that Midas lost no

time in snatching up a great earthen pitcher (but alas me! it was no longer earthen after he touched it) and hastening to the riverside. As he scampered along and forced his way through the shrubbery, it was positively marvelous to see how the foliage turned yellow behind him, as if the autumn had been there and nowhere else. On reaching the river's brink he plunged headlong in, without waiting so much as to pull off his shoes.

"Poof! poof! poof!" snorted King Midas, as his head emerged out of the water. "Well, this is really a refreshing bath, and I think it must have quite washed away the Golden Touch. And now for filling my pitcher."

As he dipped the pitcher into the water it gladdened his very heart to see it change from gold into the same good, honest earthen vessel which it had been before he touched it. He was conscious also of a change within himself. A cold, hard, and heavy weight seemed to have gone out of his bosom. No doubt his heart had been gradually losing its human substance and transmuting itself into insensible metal, but had now softened back again into flesh. Perceiving a violet that grew on the bank of the river, Midas touched it with his finger, and was overjoyed to find that the delicate flower retained its purple hue, instead of undergoing a yellow blight. The curse of the Golden Touch had therefore really been removed from him.

King Midas hastened back to the palace, and I suppose the servants knew not what to make

of it when they saw their royal master so carefully bringing home an earthen pitcher of water. But that water, which was to undo all the mischief that his folly had wrought, was more precious to Midas than an ocean of molten gold could have been. The first thing he did, as you need hardly be told, was to sprinkle it by handfuls over the golden figure of little Marygold.

No sooner did it fall on her than you would have laughed to see how the rosy color came back to the dear child's cheek, and how she began to sneeze and sputter, and how astonished she was to find herself dripping wet and her father still throwing more water over her.

"Pray do not, dear father!" cried she. "See how you have wet my nice frock, which I put on only this morning."

For Marygold did not know that she had been a little golden statue, nor could she remember anything that had happened since the moment when she ran with outstretched arms to comfort poor King Midas.

Her father did not think it necessary to tell his beloved child how very foolish he had been, but contented himself with showing how much wiser he had now grown. For this purpose he led little Marygold into the garden, where he sprinkled all the remainder of the water over the rose-bushes, and with such good effect that above five thousand roses recovered their beautiful bloom. There were two circumstances, however, which, as long as he lived, used to put King Midas in mind of the Golden Touch. One

was that the sands of the river sparkled like gold; the other, that little Marygold's hair had now a golden tinge which he had never observed in it before she had been transmuted by the effect of his kiss. The change of hue was really an improvement, and made Marygold's hair richer than in her babyhood.

When King Midas had grown quite an old man and used to trot Marygold's children on his knee, he was fond of telling them this marvelous story, pretty much as I have told it to you. And then he would stroke their glossy ringlets and tell them that their hair likewise had a rich shade of gold, which they had inherited from their mother.

"And to tell you the truth, my precious little folks," quoth King Midas, diligently trotting the children all the while, "ever since that morning I have hated the very sight of all other gold save this."

Hawthorne was by no means the first man who ever told about King Midas, nor are the children who have lived since his time the first who ever heard this story; for hundreds and hundreds of years ago, in a country very different from ours, the little Greek children heard it told in a language that would seem very strange to us. However, Hawthorne has by no means told the story just as the Greek mothers or Greek nurses might have told it to their children; he has added much which makes the story seem more real and the characters more human.

For instance, as he says, the old myth told nothing about any daughter of Midas's, and yet I think we are all ready to admit that we should not love the story half so well without dear little Marygold. Then too, the talk about Midas's spectacles and about his trotting his grandchildren on his knee is but a little pleasant fooling on the part of Hawthorne, for spectacles were not even thought of for centuries after the time of old King Midas, and it is much more than unlikely that any old Greek ever trotted children on his knee.

Hawthorne had a perfect right to make these changes in the story; for the old myths have come down to us from so long ago that they seem to belong to everybody, and every one forms his own ideas of them. Thus you will see that while the author of this story thought of Marygold as a little child who climbed up onto her father's knee, the artists in dealing with the subject have thought of her as almost a young woman. Which of these two ideas do you like better?

THE FIR TREE

HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN

UT in the forest stood a pretty little Fir Tree. It had a good place; it could have sunlight, air there was in plenty, and all around grew many larger comrades—pines as well as firs. But the little Fir Tree wished ardently to become greater. It did not care for the warm sun and the fresh air; it took no notice of the peasant children, who went about talking together, when they had come out to look for strawberries and raspberries. The children often came with a whole basketful, or with a string of berries which they had strung on a straw. Then they would sit down by the little Fir Tree and say, "How pretty and small this one is!" The Fir Tree did not like that at all.

Next year he had grown bigger, and the following year he was taller still.

"Oh, if I were only as tall as the others!" sighed the little Fir. "Then I would spread my branches far around and look out from my crown into the wide world. The birds would then build nests in my boughs, and when the wind blew I would nod grandly."

It took no pleasure in the sunshine, in the birds, or in the red clouds that went sailing over it morning and evening.

When it was winter, and the snow lay all around, white and sparkling, a hare would often come jumping along and spring right over the little Fir Tree. O, that made him so angry! But two winters went by, and when the third came, the little Tree had grown so tall that the hare was obliged to run around it.

"Oh, to grow, to grow, and become old; that's the only fine thing in the world," thought the Tree.

In the autumn the woodcutters always came and felled a few of the largest trees; that was done this year too, and the little Fir Tree, that was now quite well grown, shuddered with fear, for the stately trees fell to the ground with a crash, and their branches were cut off, so that the trees looked quite naked, long and slender, and could hardly be recognized. Then they were laid upon wagons, and the horses dragged them away out of the wood. Where were they going? What destiny awaited them?

In the spring, when the Swallows and the Stork came, the Tree asked them, "Do you know where the big firs were taken? Did you meet them?"

The Swallows knew nothing about it, but the Stork looked thoughtful, nodded his head and said:

"Yes, I think so. I met many new ships when I flew out of Egypt; on the ships were tall masts; I fancy these were the trees. They smelt like fir. I can assure you they're stately—very stately."

THE SWALLOWS AND THE STORK CAME

"Oh that I were big enough to go over the sea. What kind of a thing is this sea, and how does it look?"

"It would take long to explain all that," said the Stork, and he went away.

"Rejoice in thy youth," said the Sunbeams;

"rejoice in thy fresh growth, and in the young life that is within thee."

And the wind kissed the Tree, and the Dew wept tears upon it; but the Fir Tree did not understand.

When Christmas time approached, quite young trees were felled, sometimes trees which were neither so old nor so large as this Fir Tree, that never rested, but always wanted to go away. These beautiful young trees kept all their branches; they were put upon wagons, and horses dragged them away out of the wood.

"Where are they all going?" asked the Fir Tree. "They are not greater than I—indeed, one of them was much smaller. Why do they keep all their branches? Whither are they taken?"

"We know that! We know that!" chirped the Sparrows. "Yonder in the town we looked in at the windows. We know where the fir trees go. We have looked in at the windows and have seen that they are planted in the middle of a warm room and dressed up in the greatest splendor with the most beautiful things—gilt apples, honey-cakes, playthings, and many hundreds of candles."

"And then?" asked the Fir Tree, trembling through all its branches. "And then? what happens then?"

"Why we have not seen anything more. But it was wonderful!"

"Perhaps I may be destined to this glorious end one day!" cried the Fir Tree, rejoicing.

"That is even better than traveling across the sea. How I long for it! If it were only Christmas! Now I am great and grown up like the rest who were led away last year. Oh, if I were only on the wagon! If I were only in the warm room amidst all the pomp and splendor! And then? Yes, then something even better will come, something far more charming, else why should they adorn me so? There must be something grander, something greater still to come; but what? Oh! I'm suffering, I'm longing! I don't know myself what is the matter with me!"

"Rejoice in us," said Air and Sunshine. "Rejoice in thy fresh youth here in the woodland."

The Fir Tree did not rejoice at all, but it grew and grew; winter and summer it stood there, green, dark green. The people who saw it said, "That's a handsome tree!" and at Christmas time it was felled before any of the others. The axe cut deep into its marrow, and the tree fell to the ground with a sigh; it felt a pain, a sensation of faintness, and could not think at all of happiness, for it was sad at parting from its home, from the place where it had grown up; it knew that it should never again see the dear old companions, the little bushes and the flowers all around, perhaps not even the birds.

The Tree came to itself only when it was unloaded in a yard, with other trees, and heard a man say:

"This one is famous; we want only this one!"

Now two servants came in gay liveries, and carried the Fir Tree into a large, beautiful room. All around the walls hung pictures, and by the great stove stood large Chinese vases with lions on the covers; there were rocking chairs, silken sofas, great tables covered with picture books, and toys worth a hundred times a hundred dollars; at least, the children said so. And the Fir Tree was put into a great tub filled with sand; but no one could see that it was a tub, for it was hung round with green cloth, and stood on a large, many-colored carpet. Oh, how the Tree trembled! What was to happen now? The servants, and the young ladies also, decked it out. On one branch they hung little bags cut out of colored paper, and every bag was filled with sweetmeats. Golden apples and walnuts hung down as if they grew there, and more than a hundred little candles, red, white, and blue, were fastened to the different boughs. Dolls that looked exactly like real people—the Tree had never seen such before—swung among the foliage, and high on the summit of the Tree was fixed a tinsel star. It was splendid.

"This evening," said all, "this evening it will shine."

"Oh," thought the Tree, "that it were evening already! Oh that the lights may be soon lit! When will that be done? I wonder if trees will come out of the forest to look at me? Will the Sparrows fly against the panes? Shall I grow fast here, and stand adorned in summer and winter?"

But the Tree had a backache from mere longing, and the backache is just as bad for a tree as the headache for a person.

At last the candles were lighted. What a brilliance, what splendor! The Tree trembled so in all its branches that one of the candles set fire to a green twig, and it was scorched, but one of the young ladies hastily put the fire out.

Now the Tree might not even tremble. Oh, that was terrible! It was so afraid of setting fire to some of its ornaments, and it was quite bewildered with all the brilliance. And now the folding doors were thrown open, and a number of children rushed in as if they would have overturned the whole Tree, while the older people followed more deliberately. The little ones stood quite silent, but only for a minute; then they shouted till the room rang; they danced gleefully round the Tree, and one present after another was plucked from it.

"What are they about?" thought the Tree. "What's going to be done?"

And the candles burned down to the twigs, and as they burned down they were extinguished, and then the children were given permission to plunder the Tree. They rushed in upon it, so that every branch cracked again; if it had not been fastened by the top and by the golden star to the ceiling, the Tree certainly would have fallen down.

The children danced about with their pretty toys. No one looked at the Tree except one old man, who came up and peeped among the

branches, but only to see if a fig or an apple had not been forgotten.

"A story! A story!" shouted the children, as they drew a little fat man toward the Tree. He sat down just beneath it—"for then we shall be in the green wood," said he, "and the Tree may have the advantage of listening to my tale. But I can tell only one. Will you hear the story of Ivede-Avede, or of Klumpey-Dumpey, who fell downstairs, and still was raised up to honor and married the princess?"

"Ivede-Avede," cried some; "Klumpey-Dumpey," cried others, and there was a great crying and shouting. Only the Fir Tree was silent, and thought, "Shall I not be in it? Shall I have nothing to do in it?" But he had been in the evening's amusement and had done what was required of him.

And the fat man told about Klumpey-Dumpey, who fell downstairs, and yet was raised to honor and married the princess. And the children clapped their hands, and cried, "Tell another, tell another!" for they wanted to hear about Ivede-Avede; but they got only the story of Klumpey-Dumpey.

The Fir Tree stood quite silent and thoughtful; never had the birds in the wood told such a story as that. Klumpey-Dumpey fell downstairs, and yet came to honor and married the princess!

"Yes, so it happens in the world!" thought the Fir Tree, and believed it must be true, because that was such a nice man who told it.

THE FAT MAN TOLD ABOUT KLUMPEY-DUMPEY

"Well, who can know? Perhaps I shall fall downstairs, too, and marry a princess!" And it looked forward with pleasure to being adorned again, the next evening, with candles and toys, gold and fruit. "To-morrow I shall not tremble," it thought. "I shall rejoice in all my

splendor. To-morrow I shall hear the story of Klumpey-Dumpey again, and perhaps that of Ivede-Avede, too."

And the Tree stood all night quiet and thoughtful.

In the morning the servants and the chambermaid came in.

"Now my splendor will begin afresh," thought the Tree.

But they dragged him out of the room and upstairs to the garret, and there they put him in a dark corner where no daylight shone.

"What's the meaning of this?" thought the Tree. "What am I to do here? What is to happen?"

And he leaned against the wall, and thought, and thought. And he had time enough, for days and nights went by, and nobody came up; and when at length some one came, it was only to put some great boxes in a corner. Now the Tree stood quite hidden away, and the supposition is that it was quite forgotten.

"Now it's winter outside," thought the Tree. "The earth is hard and covered with snow, and people cannot plant me; therefore I suppose I'm to be sheltered here until spring comes. How considerate that is! How good people are! If it were only not so dark here, and so terribly solitary! Not even a little hare! It was pretty out there in the wood, when the snow lay thick and the hare sprang past; yes, even when he jumped over me; but then I did not like it. It is terribly lonely up here!"

"Piep! Piep!" said a little Mouse, and crept forward, and then came another little one. They smelt at the Fir Tree, and then slipped among the branches.

"It's horribly cold," said the two little Mice, "or else it would be comfortable here. Don't you think so, you old Fir Tree?"

"I'm not old at all," said the Fir Tree. "There are many much older than I."

"Where do you come from?" asked the Mice. "And what do you know?" They were dreadfully inquisitive.

"Tell us about the most beautiful spot on the earth. Have you been there? Have you been in the storeroom, where cheeses lie on the shelves, and hams hang from the ceiling; where one dances on tallow candles, and goes in thin and comes out fat?"

"I don't know that," replied the Tree; "but I know the wood, where the sun shines and the birds sing."

And then it told all about its youth.

And the little Mice had never heard anything of the kind; and they listened, and said:

"What a number of things you have seen! How happy you must have been!"

"I?" replied the Fir Tree; and it thought about what it had told. "Yes, those were really quite happy times." But then he told of the Christmas Eve, when he had been hung with sweetmeats and candles.

"Oh!" said the little Mice, "how happy you have been, you old Fir Tree!"

"I'm not old at all," said the Tree. "I came out of the wood only this winter. I'm only rather backward in my growth."

"What splendid stories you can tell!" said the little Mice.

And next night they came with four other little Mice, to hear what the Tree had to relate: and the more it said, the more clearly did it remember everything, and thought, "Those were quite merry days. But they may come again. Klumpey-Dumpey fell downstairs, and yet he married the princess. Perhaps I may marry a princess, too!" And then the Fir Tree thought of a pretty little Birch Tree that grew out in the forest; for the Fir Tree, that Birch was a real princess.

"Who's Klumpey-Dumpey?" asked the little Mice.

And then the Fir Tree told the whole story. It could remember every single word; and the little Mice were ready to leap to the very top of the tree with pleasure. Next night a great many more Mice came, and on Sunday two Rats even appeared; but these thought the story was not pretty, and the little Mice were sorry for that, for now they also did not like it so much as before.

"Do you know only one story?" asked the Rats.

"Only that one," replied the Tree. "I heard that on the happiest evening of my life; I did not think then how happy I was."

"That's a very miserable story. Don't you

know any about bacon and tallow candles—a storeroom story?"

"No," said the Tree.

"Then we'd rather not hear you," said the Rats.

And they went back to their own people. The little Mice at last also stayed away; and then the Tree sighed and said, "It was very nice when they sat around me, the merry little Mice, and listened when I spoke to them. Now that's past, too. But I shall remember to be pleased when they take me out."

But when did that happen? Why, it was one morning that people came and rummaged in the garret; the boxes were put away, and the Tree was brought out; they certainly threw him rather roughly on the floor, but a servant dragged him away at once to the stairs, where the daylight shone.

"Now life is beginning again," thought the Tree.

It felt the fresh air and the first sunbeams, and then it was out in the courtyard. Everything passed so quickly that the Tree quite forgot to look at itself, there was so much to look at all round. The courtyard was close to a garden, and there everything was blooming; the roses hung fresh and fragrant over the little paling, the linden trees were in blossom, and the swallows cried, "Quinze-wit! quinze-wit! my husband's come!" But it was not the Fir Tree that they meant.

"Now I shall live!" cried the Tree, rejoic-

ingly, and spread its branches far out; but, alas! they were all withered and yellow, and it lay in the corner among nettles and weeds. The tinsel star was still upon it, and shone in the bright sunshine.

In the courtyard a couple of the merry children were playing who had danced round the Tree at Christmas time, and had rejoiced over it. One of the youngest ran up and tore off the golden star.

"Look what is sticking to the ugly old Fir Tree!" said the child, and he trod on the branches till they cracked under his boots.

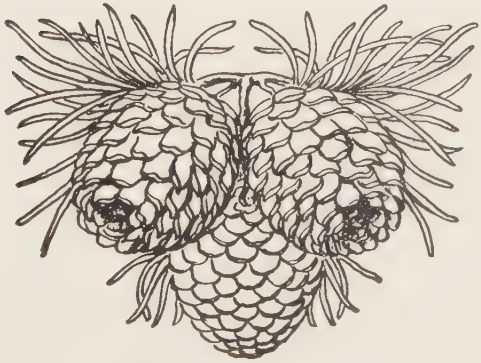
And the Tree looked at all the blooming flowers and the splendor of the garden, then looked at itself, and wished it had remained in the dark corner of the garret; it thought of its fresh youth in the wood, of the merry Christmas Eve, and of the little Mice which had listened so pleasantly to the story of Klumpey-Dumpey.

"Past! past!" said the old Tree. "Had I but rejoiced when I could have done so! Past! past!"

And the servant came and chopped the Tree into little pieces; a whole bundle lay there; it blazed brightly under the great brewing copper, and it sighed deeply, and each sigh was like a little shot; and the children, who were at play there, ran up, seated themselves by the fire, looked into it, and cried "Puff! puff!" But at each explosion, which was a deep sigh, the Tree thought of a summer day in the woods, or of a winter night there, when the stars beamed; he

thought of Christmas Eve and of Klumpey-Dumpey, the only story he had ever heard or knew how to tell; and thus the Tree was burned.

The boys played in the garden, and the youngest had on his breast a golden star, which the Tree had worn on its happiest evening. Now that was past, and the Tree's life was past, and the story is past, too: past! past!—and that's the way with all stories.



HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN

HEN a man writes as beautiful and as interesting stories as Hans Christian Andersen has written for children, we like to know something about him; and we find that nothing that he ever wrote was much more interesting than his own life. Certainly no one who knew him while he was a child could have thought that he would ever have much chance of becoming a famous man.

He was born on April 2nd, 1805, in the city of Odense, in Denmark. The room in which he was born was kitchen, parlor, bedroom and workshop for the whole family, for the family of Andersen had little to do with, and little knowledge of how to make the best of what they had. The father was a cobbler, but a cobbler who was much more interested in other things than he was in his trade, into which he had been forced quite contrary to his own wishes. The mother was a careless, easy-going person, who was kind to her child, but had not the slightest idea of training him, or of restraining any of his odd tastes. These tastes were determined more or less by his father, who was a great reader, particularly of plays; and we see the results of this early introduction to the drama in Hans Christian Andersen throughout his life.

Little Hans Christian was a most extra-

HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN

ordinary child. He was ugly, as he remained all his life; for his body and neck were too long and too thin, his feet and his hands were too large and too bony, his nose was large and hooked, and his eyes were small and set like a Chinaman's. However, it was not his looks, but his oddity, which cut him off from other children. He would sit all day and make doll clothes, or cut dolls and animals out of paper; and these were not things which would be likely to make other boys like him and admire him. He had little schooling, and even when he was a grown man he knew none too much of the grammar of his own language.

After his father's death, when he himself was about eleven, little Hans Christian was more solitary than before, and shut himself up still more with his doll's clothes, his toy theaters, and his books, for he was, like his father, very fond of reading. Especially did he like those books which had anything about ghosts or witches or fairies in them. While he was but a child, he wrote a play of his own, in which most of the characters were kings and queens and princesses; and because he felt that it could not be possible that such lofty personages would talk the same language as ordinary people, he picked out from a dictionary, which he managed somehow to get hold of, French words, German words, English words, and high-sounding Danish words, and strung them all together to make up the conversation of his characters.

It was no more than natural that such a strange, unattractive-looking child should be made fun of by the prosaic, commonplace people of his neighborhood, and this was untold pain to the sensitive boy. There were, however, in the town, people of a higher class, who perceived in the boy something beyond the ordinary, and who interested themselves in his behalf. They had him sent to school, but he preferred to dream away his time rather than to study, and his short period of schooling really taught him nothing.

His mother, careless as she was, began to see that matters must change—that the boy could not go on all his life in this aimless fashion; but since he steadily declined to be a tailor or a cobbler, or indeed to take up any trade, it seemed no easy question to settle. However, in 1818, there came to Odense a troupe of actors who gave plays and operas. Young Andersen, who by making acquaintance with the billposter was allowed to witness the performances from behind the scenes, decided at once that he was cut out to be an actor. There was no demand for actors in his native town, and he therefore decided to go to Copenhagen, the capital of Denmark, there to seek his fortune.

With about five dollars in his pocket, Andersen reached Copenhagen in September, 1819, but he found that a fortune was by no means as easily made as he had fancied. He himself felt convinced that he should be a famous actor, but how was he to convince any one else of this

fact? From one actor to another, from one theater manager to another he went, but all told him that for one reason or another he was not fitted for the stage. Particularly did Andersen resent the excuse of one manager, who told him that he was too thin. This fault Andersen assured him that he was only too willing to remedy, if he would only give him a chance and a salary; but still the heartless manager refused.

Finally the boy was destitute of money and knew not where to turn for more, for he was too proud to go back to his native town. However, an Italian singing teacher, Siboni, into whose home Andersen had almost forced himself while a dinner party was in progress, became interested in him, and with some friends provided him with enough to live on. He also gave him singing lessons until the boy's voice gave out. Other influential people gradually became interested in the strange creature, who certainly did appear to have some talent, but who had even more obvious defects; and so he lived on, supported in the most meager fashion.

Determined to write plays if he could not play them, Andersen composed drama after drama. He would rush into the house of a total stranger, of whom perhaps he had heard as a patron of genius, declaim some scenes from his plays, and then rush out, leaving his auditor in gasping amazement. Finally he made the acquaintance of one of the directors of the Royal Theatre, Jonas Collin, who was ever afterward his best

friend. Through the influence of this kindly man, Andersen was sent to school at Slagelse, and as he said later, the days of his degradation were over once and for all.

Andersen did not have an entirely pleasant time at school. He loved systematic study no more than he had early in his life, and he did not fall in very readily with his young companions. However, he persisted, for he was ashamed to disappoint his patron Collin, and by the time he left school in 1827, he had an education of which he needed not to be ashamed. After his return to Copenhagen, he pursued his studies with a tutor, and was able to pass his examinations most satisfactorily.

From this time on, Andersen's life was in the main happy, although he was so sensitive and so sentimental that he was constantly fancying grievances where none existed, and making himself miserable over imaginary snubs. It is true that his dramatic works were not well received, but this was because there was no real merit in them, and not, as Andersen persisted in believing, because the critics to whom they were submitted had grudges against him. His first works that made a distinctly favorable impression were travel sketches, for Andersen was all his life a great traveler, and knew how to write most charmingly and humorously of all that he saw. His trip to Germany, his journeys to Italy, to Turkey, to Spain, and to Sweden, were all treated most delightfully, and every book that appeared increased the author's

fame. His visit to Italy, the country which all his life he loved above any other, also resulted in a novel, *The Improvisatore*, which became immensely popular and caused Andersen to be hailed as a future great novelist.

However, it was neither for travel sketches nor for novels that he was to be best known, but for something entirely different, which he himself was inclined at first to look down upon, and which many of his critics at the outset regarded as mere child's play. These were the fairy tales which he began in 1835, and which he published at intervals from that time until his death. The children loved *The Ugly Duckling*, *The Fir Tree* and *The Snow Queen;* but it was not only the children who loved them. Gradually people all over the world began to realize that here was a man who knew how to tell tales to children in so masterly a manner that even grown folks would do well to listen to him.

Now that Andersen was at the height of his fame, he had no lack of friends; for whether he was in Germany, or Spain, or England, he was everywhere given ovations that were fit for a king, and was everywhere entertained by the best people in the most sumptuous manner. At one time he stayed for five weeks with Charles Dickens in his home at Gad's Hill, and the two were ever afterward firm friends. All of these people loved Andersen, not because of his fame, but because of the stories which had brought him fame, and because he was distinctly lovable

in spite of his oddity; for Andersen was still odd. He was ugly and ungainly, and, owing to his fondness for decoration, often dressed in the most peculiar fashion. Then, too, he was so childishly vain of the fame which had come to him that he was at any time quite likely to stop in a crowded street and call across to a friend on the other side about some favorable notice which he had just received. After people became accustomed to this trait, however, they saw that it was but another phase of the child-likeness which made Andersen so charming and so unlike many other famous men.

Despite his intimate knowledge of children, Andersen was never really fond of them. They worried him, and he, for some reason or other, never seemed very attractive to them. But if he could be induced to tell them or read them one of his stories, illustrating it with the queer antics and faces which he alone knew how to make, he was certain of an intensely interested audience.

Andersen's fame and the love felt for him at home and abroad grew with his every year, and when he died, in 1875, his death was looked upon as a more than national calamity. The highest people in Denmark, including the king and queen, who had come to look upon Andersen's friendship as a great honor, followed him to his grave; and children all over the world sorrowed when they were told that the author of the beloved *Fairy Tales* would never write them another story.

EIGHT TINY REINDEER

A VISIT FROM SAINT NICHOLAS

CLEMENT C. MOORE

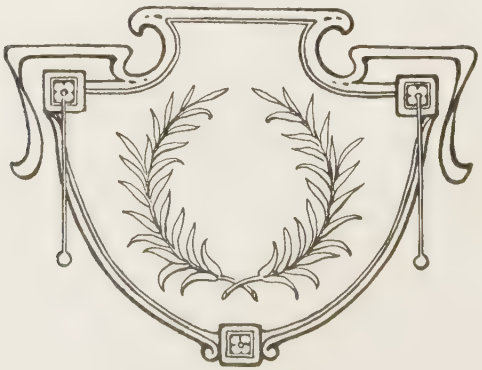
'Twas the night before Christmas, when all
through the house
Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse;
The stockings were hung by the chimney with
care,

In hopes that Saint Nicholas soon would be there;
The children were nestled all snug in their beds,
While visions of sugarplums danced in their heads;
And mamma in her kerchief, and I in my cap,
Had just settled our brains for a long winter's nap,—
When out on the lawn there arose such a clatter,
I sprang from my bed to see what was the matter.
Away to the window I flew like a flash,
Tore open the shutters and threw up the sash.
The moon on the breast of the new-fallen snow
Gave a lustre of midday to objects below;
When, what to my wondering eyes should appear,
But a miniature sleigh and eight tiny reindeer,
With a little old driver, so lively and quick,
I knew in a moment it must be Saint Nick.
More rapid than eagles his coursers they came,
And he whistled and shouted, and called them by name:
"Now, Dasher! now, Dancer! now, Prancer and Vixen!
On, Comet! on, Cupid! on, Donder and Blitzen!
To the top of the porch, to the top of the wall!
Now dash away, dash away, dash away all!"
As dry leaves that before the wild hurricane fly,
When they meet with an obstacle, mount to the sky,
So up to the house-top the coursers they flew,
With the sleigh full of toys,—and Saint Nicholas too.
And then in a twinkling I heard on the roof
The prancing and pawing of each little hoof.

As I drew in my head, and was turning around,
Down the chimney Saint Nicholas came with a bound.
He was dressed all in fur from his head to his foot,
And his clothes were all tarnished with ashes and soot;
A bundle of toys he had flung on his back,
And he looked like a peddler just opening his pack.
His eyes how they twinkled! his dimples how merry!
His cheeks were like roses, his nose like a cherry;
His droll little mouth was drawn up like a bow,
And the beard on his chin was as white as the snow.
The stump of a pipe he held tight in his teeth,
And the smoke it encircled his head like a wreath.
He had a broad face and a little round belly
That shook, when he laughed, like a bowl full of jelly.
He was chubby and plump,—a right jolly old elf;
And I laughed, when I saw him, in spite of myself.
A wink of his eye and a twist of his head
Soon gave me to know I had nothing to dread.
He spoke not a word, but went straight to his work,
And filled all the stockings; then turned with a jerk,
And laying his finger aside of his nose,
And giving a nod, up the chimney he rose.
He sprang to his sleigh, to his team gave a whistle,

And away they all flew like the down of a thistle;
But I heard him exclaim, ere he drove out of sight,
"Happy Christmas to all, and to all a good-night!"

Clement Clarke Moore, who wrote this poem, published a whole volume of poems, but none of the others is as famous as is this. It was written for his own children, and he did not even know that it was to be published. It appeared in the Troy Sentinel in 1823, just two days before Christmas, and we can imagine how delighted children were when they had it read to them for the first time. It is not a great poem; but no Christmas poem that has been published since has been half as popular with children, and even grown people like it for its jolliness and its Christmas spirit.



HOW THE WOLF WAS BOUND

ADAPTED BY ANNA McCALEB

IT seems strange that any one who might have lived with the gods in their beautiful city of Asgard[1] and have shared in their joys and their good works should have preferred to associate with the ugly, wicked giants. But that was the case with Loki—Red Loki, as he was called, because of his red hair. He was handsome like a god; he was wise and clever like a god—more clever than any of the other gods. In one way, however, he differed from the others; he had a bad heart, and liked much better to use his cleverness in getting gods and men into trouble than in making them happy. Besides this, he was very proud, and could not bear to submit even to Odin, the king of the gods.

"Who is Odin,"[2] he muttered, "that he should be set over me? Is he more clever than I am? Is he more handsome, with his one eye and his gray beard?" And Loki held his handsome head high.

Proud as he was, however, he was not too proud to do a disgraceful thing. He went off

1. The Norse peoples believed that their gods lived above the earth in a wonderful city named Asgard. From this city they crossed to the earth on a bridge, which by people on earth was known as the rainbow.

2. Odin, chief of the Norse gods, had been induced to part with one eye in exchange for wisdom.

to the home of the giants and married the ugliest and fiercest of all the giantesses. Just why he did it does not seem very clear, for he certainly could not have loved her. Perhaps he did it just to spite the other gods and to show them that he cared nothing for what they thought.

But he must have repented of his act when he saw the children which the giantess bore him, for they were certainly the most hideous and frightful children that were ever born into the world. The daughter, Hela, was the least awful, but even she was by no means a person one would care to meet. She was half white and half blue, and she had such gloomy, angry eyes that any one who looked at her sank into unconquerable sadness and finally into death. But the other two! One was a huge, glistening, scaly serpent, with a mouth that dripped poison, and glaring, beady eyes; and the other was a white-fanged, red-eyed wolf.

These two monsters grew so rapidly that the king of the gods, looking down from his throne in the heavens, was struck with fear.

"The gods themselves will not be safe if those monsters are allowed to go unchecked," he said. "Down there in the home of the giants they will be taught to hate the gods, and at the rate they're growing, they'll soon be strong enough to shake our very palaces."

He sent, therefore, the strongest of his sons to fetch the children of Loki before him. Well was it for those gathered about Odin's throne that they were gods and goddesses, else would

the eyes of Hela have sent them to their death. Upon her, Odin looked more in pity than in anger—she was not all bad.

"You, Hela," he said, "although it is not safe to allow you to remain above ground, where you may do great harm to men, are not all wicked. Honor, therefore, shall be yours, and ease; but happiness shall be far from you. I shall make you queen over the regions of the dead—that kingdom which is as large as nine worlds."

Then it was believed that the only honorable form of death was death in battle; and the bravest of the heroes who died in battle were brought by Odin's messengers, the Valkyries, who always hovered on their cloud-horses above battlefields, to the great palace of Valhalla. Therefore only the cowards or the weak, who died in their beds, went to the underground realm, and Hela knew that they were not subjects of whom she could be proud. Nevertheless, she went without a word.

Odin, then, without speaking, suddenly stooped and seized in his strong arms the wriggling, slippery serpent. Over the wall of the city he threw it, and the gods watched it as it fell down, down, down, until at last it sank from sight into the sea. This was by no means the last of the serpent, however; under the water it grew and grew until it was so large that it formed a girdle about the whole earth, and could hold its tail in its mouth.

The question as to what should be done with

the great wolf, Fenris, was not so easily answered. It seemed to all the gods that he had grown larger and fiercer in the brief time he had stood before them, and none of them dared touch him. At length some one whispered, "Let us kill him," and the wolf turned and showed his teeth at the speaker; for as he was the son of Loki, he could understand and speak the language of the gods.

"That cannot be," said Odin. "Have we not sworn that the streets of our city shall never be stained with blood? Let us leave the matter until another time."

So the wolf was permitted to roam about Asgard, and the gods all tried to be kind to him, for they thought that by their kindness they might tame him. However, he grew stronger and stronger and more and more vicious, until only Tyr,[3] the bravest of all the gods, dared go near him to give him food. One day, as the gods sat in their council hall, they heard the wolf howling through the streets.

"How long," said Odin, "is our city to be made hideous by such noises? We must bind Fenris the wolf."

Silence followed his words, for all knew what a serious thing it was that Odin proposed. Fenris must be bound—that was true; but who would dare attempt the task? And what chain could ever hold him? At length Thor[4] arose,

3. Tyr was the Norse war-god.

4. Thor, god of thunder, was the strongest of all the gods.

and all sighed with relief; for if any one could bind the wolf, it was Thor.

"I will make a chain," he said, "stronger than ever chain was before, and then we shall find some way to fasten it upon him."

Thor strode to his smithy, and heaped his fire high. All night he worked at his anvil; whenever any of the gods awakened they could hear the clank! clank! clank! of his great hammer, and could see from their windows the sparks from his smithy shining through the gloom. In the morning the chain was finished, and all wondered at its strength. Then Thor called to the huge wolf and said:

"Fenris, you are stronger than any of the gods. We cannot break this chain, but for you it will be mere child's play. Let yourself be bound with it, that we may see how great your strength really is."

Now the wolf knew his might better than any of them did, and he suffered himself to be bound fast. Then he arose, stretched himself as if he were just waking from a nap, and calmly walked off, leaving the fragments of the chain on the ground. The amazed gods looked at each other with fright in their eyes—what *could* they do?

"I will make a stronger chain," said Thor, undiscouraged. And again he went to his smithy, where he worked all day and all night.

"This is the strongest chain that can ever be made," he said, when he presented it to the gods. "If this will not hold him, nothing can."

Calling the wolf, they flattered him and praised his strength, and finally persuaded him to let himself be bound with this chain, "just for a joke." You may be sure, however, that they said nothing about its being the strongest chain that could ever be made.

Fenris pretended to lie helpless for a time; then he struggled to his feet, shook his mighty limbs, tossed his hideous head—and the chain snapped, and fell into a hundred pieces! Then indeed there was consternation among the gods; but Odin, the all-wise, had a sudden helpful thought. Calling his swiftest messenger, he said:

"Go to the dwarfs in their underground smithy. Tell them to forge for us a chain which cannot be broken; and do you make all haste, for the wolf grows stronger each moment."

Off hastened the messenger, and in less time than it takes to tell it he was with the dwarfs, giving them the message from Odin. The little men bustled about here and there, gathering up the materials of which the chain was to be made; and when these were all collected and piled in a heap, you might have looked and looked, and you would have seen nothing! For this extraordinary chain was made of such things as the roots of mountains, the sound of a cat's footsteps, a woman's beard, the spittle of birds and the voice of fishes. When it was finished the messenger hurried back to Asgard and displayed it proudly to the anxious gods. It was as fine and soft as a silken string, but the gods

THE WORKSHOP OF THE DWARFS

knew the workmanship of the dwarfs, and had no fear.

"It will be easy," they said, "to persuade Fenris to let himself be bound with this."

But they were mistaken. The wolf looked at the soft, shining cord suspiciously, and said:

"If that is what it looks to be, I shall gain no honor from breaking it; if it has been made by magic, I shall never free myself."

"But we will free you," cried the gods. "This is but a game to test your strength."

"Not you," growled the wolf. "I've lived here long enough to know that if I don't look out for myself, no one else will look out for me."

"All right, if you are afraid," said Thor, with a shrug of his shoulders. And the wolf replied, "To show that I am no more cowardly than the gods, I will suffer myself to be bound if one of you will put his hand into my mouth."

To refuse to do this was, as the gods knew, to admit that they had meant trickery, and thus to make Fenris hate them worse than ever. But what one of them was willing to sacrifice his hand? Thor was no coward, but he knew that he was the chief defender of the gods, and he could not let himself be maimed. However, they did not have to wait long, for Tyr came forward, and thrust his hand into the wolf's mouth.

The wolf, his suspicions quieted, let himself be wrapped and bound with the cord; and then, as he had done with the other chains, he stretched himself—or tried to. For the magic rope but drew tighter and tighter for all his struggling, until it cut into his very skin. Enraged, he brought his great teeth sharply together, and bit off Tyr's hand at the wrist. Then he howled and snapped and growled, until the gods, unwilling to have their peace disturbed, thrust a sword into his mouth, so that the hilt rested upon his lower jaw and the point pierced the roof of his mouth. They next fastened the cord to a rock, and left the wolf to writhe and struggle and shake the earth. So they were freed for a time from their enemy, but at the cost of Tyr's hand.

THE DEATH OF BALDER

ADAPTED BY ANNA McCALEB

OF all the gods in Asgard, Balder was most beloved; for no one had ever seen him frown, and his smile and the light of his eyes made all happy who looked at him. And of all who dwelt in Asgard or ever gained admission there, Loki was most hated. Clever as he was, he used his cleverness to harass the other gods and to make them wretched, and often he attempted real crimes against them. It was natural enough that Loki, slighted and frowned upon, should hate Balder the beautiful, even though Balder himself had never spoken an unkind word to him.

"I cannot bear the sight of his shining hair and happy eyes," muttered Loki to himself. "If I could just blot them out of Asgard I should be revenging myself upon the gods for their bitterness toward me, for harm to Balder would hurt them more than harm to themselves."

One morning the assembled gods noticed that when Balder came among them he looked less radiant than usual, and they gathered about him, begging that he tell them what was wrong.

"It's nothing! It's nothing!" said Balder; and he forced a smile, but it was not his old smile. It reminded them all of the faint light the sun sheds when a thin cloud has drifted before it.

BALDER CAME AMONG THEM

All day long, as they went about their tasks and their pleasures, the gods were conscious of a feeling of gloom; and when they stopped and questioned themselves, they found that the cause lay in the diminished brightness of Balder's smile. When, the next morning, Balder again came slowly to the great hall of the gods and showed a careworn face, Odin and Frigga, his father and mother, drew him apart and implored him to tell them the cause of his grief.

"My son," spoke Odin, "it is not well that this gloom should rest on all the gods, and they

not know the cause. Perhaps we, your father and your mother, may help you."

At last Balder told them that for two nights he had had strange, haunting dreams; what they were he could not remember clearly when he awoke, but he could not shake off their depressing effect.

"I only know," he said, "that there was ever a thick cloud, which drifted between me and the sun, and there were confused sounds of woe, and travelings in dark, difficult places."

Now the gods knew well that their dreams were messages given them by the Norns, or Fates, and not for a moment did Odin and Frigga venture to laugh at Balder's fears. They soothed him, however, by promising to find some means of warding off any danger that might be threatening him. Somewhat cheered, Balder went home to his palace to comfort his distressed wife, Nanna, while Odin and Frigga discussed measures for their son's safety.

"I," said Odin, "shall ride to the domains of Hela, queen of the dead, and question the great prophetess who lies buried there, as to what Balder's dream may mean." And mounting Sleipnir, his eight-footed steed, he rode away.

Across the rainbow bridge he passed, out of the light, and down, down, down into the dark, hopeless realm of Hela. As he rode by the gate he saw that preparations for a feast were being made within. A gloomy feast it would have to be in those drear regions, but evidently it was

being spread for some honored guest, for rich tapestries and rings of gold covered the couches, and vessels of gold graced the tables. Past the gate rode Odin, to a grave without the wall, where for ages long the greatest of all prophetesses had lain buried. Here, in this dark, chill place, was to be spoken the fate of Balder, bringer of light.

Solemnly Odin chanted the awful charms that had power to raise the dead, and king of gods as he was, he started when the grave opened, and the prophetess, veiled in mist, rose before him.

"Who art thou?" she demanded in hollow, ghostlike tones. "And what canst thou wish to know so weighty that only I, long dead, can answer thee?"

Knowing that she would refuse to answer him should she know who he really was, Odin concealed his identity, and simply asked for whom the feast was preparing in Hela's realm.

"For Balder, light of gods and men," replied the prophetess.

"And who shall dare to strike him down?" cried Odin.

"By the hand of his blind brother Hoder shall he fall. And now let me rest." And the prophetess sank again into her tomb, leaving Odin with a heart more heavy and chill than the darkness which closed round him.

Meanwhile Frigga had busied herself with a plan which her mother love had suggested. First to all the gods in Asgard, then through all

the earth did she go, saying, "Promise me—swear to me—that you will never hurt Balder." Every bird, every beast, every creeping thing; all plants, stones and metals; all diseases and poisons known to gods and men; fire, water, earth, air—all things gladly took oath to do Balder no harm.

"For do not we," they cried to Frigga, "love him even as you do? And why then should we harm him?"

Gladly Frigga took her way toward home, feeling certain that she had saved Balder forever. As she was about to enter Odin's palace, Valhalla, she noticed on a branch of an oak that grew there, a tiny, weak-looking shrub.

"That mistletoe is too young to promise, and too weak to do any harm," said Frigga; and she passed it by.

All the gods rejoiced with her when she told of her success; even Odin partially shook off his fears, as he told the younger gods and the heroes who dwelt with him in his palace to go and seek enjoyment after their period of gloom. To the great playground of the gods they hastened, and there they invented a new game. Balder, smiling as of old, took his stand in the midst, and all the others hurled at him weapons, stones and sticks, and even hit at him with their battle-axes. They grew very merry over this pastime, for do what they would, none of them could harm Balder; the missiles either fell short, or dropped to his feet harmless.

Loki, passing by, was at first amazed when

he saw Balder being used as a target; then, when he saw that Balder remained unhurt through all, he became angry—he could not bear this proof of the fact that all things loved Balder. Hastening away, he disguised himself as an old woman and hobbled off to Fensalir, the mansion of Frigga.

"Do you know," said this old woman, entering the room where Frigga sat spinning, "that the gods and heroes are playing a very dangerous game? They are hurling all sorts of things at your son Balder, who stands in their midst."

"That is not a dangerous game," replied Frigga, smiling serenely. "Last year it might have been, but now all things have given me their solemn oath not to harm Balder."

"Well, well, well," said the old woman, "isn't that wonderful? To think that any being should be so much beloved that everything should promise not to hurt him! You said *everything*, did you not?"

"Yes," replied Frigga. "That is, it really amounts to everything. There is one tiny parasite, the mistletoe, which grows on the Valhalla oak, which I did not bother with."

Once out of sight of Frigga, Loki moved rapidly enough; and shortly he appeared, in his own form, among the gods, who were still shouting with joy over their game. In his hand he carried a dart; but who could have guessed, to look at it, that it had been fashioned from the mistletoe on the Valhalla oak?

Outside of the circle of the gods stood Hoder,

HODER HURLED THE DART

Balder's blind brother, and there was no smile on his face. Loki approached him and asked craftily:

"Why do you not join in the game? Are you not afraid that Balder will think you are jealous of his good fortune if you take no part in this sport they have invented in his honor?"

"Alas!" said poor Hoder, "I am left out of all the sports of the gods. How can I, with my sightless eyes, tell where Balder is? And you see that I have nothing in my hand. What, then, could I throw?"

"I have here a little dart that I will give you," replied Loki. "And since you cannot direct your aim, I will guide your arm."

Joyfully Hoder thanked him, and when Loki indicated the direction in which he was to throw, he hurled the dart with all his might. Unswervingly flew the mistletoe dart, and instead of falling at Balder's feet, it lodged in his heart, so that he fell dead on the grass.

Then, instead of the laughter which Hoder waited to hear, there went up a shuddering wail of terror; and angry hands seized Hoder and angry voices were in his ear.

"What have I done?" he pleaded. "I but wished to show honor to Balder as the rest have done."

"And you have killed him!" they cried. "You shall die yourself."

"Peace! Peace!" said Heimdal. "Such a deed of violence must not stain the home of the gods. Moreover, Hoder did it all unwittingly. It was Loki who directed his aim, and we are all to blame that we allowed him to set foot on our playground."

Bitter indeed was Hoder's grief, and he implored his heart-broken mother, Frigga, that he might be allowed to take Balder's place in dark Hela's realm.

"Not you alone," she replied, "but any of the gods, would willingly die for Balder. But not in that way can he be brought back to Asgard. There is one chance—speak to Hermod, fleetest of the gods; tell him to take Odin's horse, Sleipnir, and ride to Hela's abode. Perchance, if he entreat her, she may give Balder up." Hermod, at the word of the despairing

Hoder, mounted the eight-footed steed, and set off on the perilous journey.

Meanwhile, the other gods prepared the funeral pyre for Balder, determined that it should be worthy of the beloved and honored god. Great pine trees were felled and piled upon the deck of Ringhorn, Balder's ship; tapestry hangings, garlands of flowers and ornaments of gold and silver were heaped upon the pyre.

And finally, in sad procession, came the gods, bearing Balder's body, which they placed upon the flowers. His horse and his dogs were killed and placed beside him, that they might be with him to serve him in the underworld. Then one after one of the gods stepped forward and chanted their farewells; but when Nanna's turn came, she was unable to speak. Her heart broke, and her spirit fled to join that of her husband. The gods could not sorrow for her death; they knew that the abode of the dead would have less terrors for the loving pair if they could be together there, so without tears they laid her beside her husband.

Last of all, Odin advanced and cast upon the pyre his treasured ring, Draupnir, gift of the dwarfs, as an offering to his dead son. Then Thor, with a touch of his hammer, which caused the lightning, set fire to the pile, and the ship, with sails set, was launched. There was no shouting, such as had usually accompanied the launching of Balder's ship; silently the gods watched the ship float out upon the sea.

"And wreathed in smoke, the ship stood out to sea.
Soon with a roaring rose the mighty fire,
And the pile crackled; and between the logs
Sharp quivering tongues of flame shot out, and leapt,
Curling and darting, higher, till they lick'd
The summit of the pile, the dead, the mast,
And ate the shriveling sails; but still the ship
Drove on, ablaze above her hull with fire.
And the gods stood upon the beach and gazed,
And while they gazed, the sun went lurid down
Into the smoke-wrapt sea, and night came on.
Then the wind fell, with night, and there was calm;
But through the night they watched the burning ship
Still carried o'er the distant waters on,
Farther and farther, like an eye of fire.
And long, in the far dark, blazed Balder's pile;
But fainter, as the stars rose high, it flared;
The bodies were consumed, ash choked the pile.
And as, in a decaying winter fire,
A charr'd log, falling, makes a shower of sparks —
So with a shower of sparks the pile fell in,
Reddening the sea around; and all was dark."[1]

Then, when all was over, the gods went mournfully back to their homes, there to await the return of Hermod. Their palaces were brightly illuminated, but no lights shone from

1. The poetic quotations in this story are from Matthew Arnold's *Balder Dead.*

the windows of Breidablik, Balder's palace; and as long as that was dark, the gods cared little for the brilliance of their own dwellings.

Hermod, in the meantime, had journeyed across the rainbow bridge, and on and on toward the north until he reached the Giall river, which runs between the regions of Hela and the upper world. Well the guard of the bridge knew, when she heard on the bridge the noise of the horse's feet, that it was no shade who was crossing; but when Hermod told his errand, he was allowed to go on. And now his way led over trackless, slippery ice, on which scarce any other horse could have kept his footing; and surely no other horse could have leapt, as did Sleipnir, the gate to Hela's own realm. Once within, Hermod came rapidly into the presence of the queen, and on his knees before her implored her to allow Balder to return to the light and the upper air.

"'For Heaven was Balder born, the city of gods
And heroes, where they live in light and joy.
Thither restore him, for his place is there!'"

Hela remained unmoved by his pleadings; and what wonder? For she was Loki's daughter, and knew by whose act Balder had been sent below. Finally she said:

"Hermod, I shall try whether the protestations that all things lament Balder are indeed true. Return to Asgard; and if, through all the earth, all things, living and dead, weep for Balder, he shall return. But if one thing in all

the world refuses to shed tears, here he shall stay."

Cheered by this promise, Hermod turned to depart, but before he left he talked with Balder and with Nanna, his wife. They told him that all honor which could be paid to any one in the realms of the dead was paid to them; that Balder was made the judge in disputes between the shades. But despite that, the days were weary, hopeless; no joy was there, nothing substantial—just days and nights of unvarying twilight, with never a gleam of real brightness. Nor would Balder admit that there was cause for rejoicing in the promise of Hela.

"Well we know the family of Loki. Were there not some trick, Hela would never have spoken that word."

Nevertheless, it was with a heart lighter than at his coming that Hermod set out on his return journey. And when he reached Asgard there was rejoicing among the gods. For the first time since Balder's death, there were the sounds of cheerful hurryings to and fro and of gods calling each to each as they set out upon their tasks; for all the gods wanted a part in the work of bringing Balder back to life.

In twos and threes they rode throughout all the world, and soon "all that lived, and all without life, wept." Trees, stones, flowers, metals joined willingly in grief for Balder the beautiful; and most of the gods speedily returned in joy. But Hermod, as he rode, came to the mouth of a dark cave where sat an old hag named Thok.

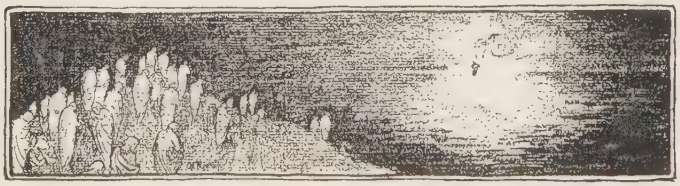
AT THE MOUTH OF A CAVE SAT AN OLD HAG

Years long she had sat there, and the gods knew her well, for she always cried out mockingly to all who passed by; but Hermod could not know that to-day Loki had changed forms with the old hag, and that it was really that enemy of the gods who sat before him. Dismounting, he besought the old woman to weep for Balder, as all things in heaven and earth had promised to do. But in a shrill voice she cried:

"With dry tears will Thok weep for Balder. Let Hela keep her prey."

And as she fled, with harsh laughter, to the cave's depth, Hermod knew that it was Loki who had this second time stolen life from Balder.

Sadly he rode back to Asgard, and in silent grief the gods heard his tale; for they knew that brightness was gone forever from the abode of the gods—that Balder the beautiful should return no more.



This story of Balder is one of those myths which were invented to explain natural happenings. The ancient peoples, knowing nothing about science, could not account for such things as the rising and setting of the sun and the change from summer to winter; and they made

up explanations which in time grew into interesting stories.

Some students believe that in this story the death of Balder (the sun) by the hand of Hoder (darkness) represents the going down of the sun at each day's close; or, as the old-time peoples, who regarded the day, the night, the sun, the wind as living beings, would have phrased it, the overcoming of light by darkness.

Another explanation, and a more probable one, is that the death of Balder represents the close of the short northern summer and the coming on of the long winter. That is, the dreary winter, with its darkness, is represented by Hoder, who had strength, but could not make use of it to aid men or gods; who could, however, with his blind strength, slay Balder, who stood for the blessed, life-giving qualities of the summer sun.

Loki represented fire. He had in him elements of good, but because of the fact that he had used his power often to harm, as does fire, instead of to bless, he was feared and hated and avoided; and thus he became jealous of Balder.

For a myth which the Greeks and Romans invented about the sun, see the story of *Phaethon*, on page 246 of this volume. The stories are totally unlike, as they deal with different happenings; but a comparison of *Phaethon* with *The Death of Balder* will show you that the ancient Greeks and the ancient Norsemen were alike in one thing—they both made dramatic tales out of the things they saw about them.

THE PUNISHMENT OF LOKI

ADAPTED BY ANNA McCALEB

FTER Balder's death the gods felt that they had little to make them happy. Their thoughts dwelt always on their loss, or on their desire to punish Loki; and in neither of these thoughts was there any joy, for to the pure minds of the gods, the thought of violence could bring nothing but pain.

One day the sea-god Aegir sent to the dwellers in Asgard an invitation to a banquet in his sea caverns, and all accepted except Thor, who had business that called him elsewhere. On the appointed morning they appeared at Aegir's palace, and while at first they forced themselves to smile and appear cheerful, in compliment to their host, they soon found themselves, because of the novelty of all about them, becoming genuinely interested. The palace was of coral, pink and white—rough on the outside, but smooth and polished within; and the floors were strewn with sand so fine and white that it looked like marble. Draperies of bright-colored seaweed hung everywhere, and the gay sea flowers met their eyes at every turn, while the dishes and cups in which the feast was served were the most delicate pearl-tinted shells. Strange opal lights filtered through the water and into the banquet-

ing hall, and great whales and sea snakes looked in through the windows on the gods as they sat at table.

All was cheerfulness and merriment, but suddenly the gods felt a chill come over them, as if a wind from Hela's ice-bound realm had rushed past. Turning, they saw Loki on the threshold. With a muttered excuse for his lateness he slipped into his seat; and then, since none except his host greeted him, and since the merry talk was not resumed, he glanced about the table and said:

"Pretty manners are these! Does no one pledge me in wine? Does no one have a word for me?"

Painfully the gods forced themselves to take up their conversation, though all avoided talking directly to Loki, whose expression became more lowering every moment. At length Odin turned to his host.

"This servant, Funfeng, is deft and skilful. Even in my palace I have not his superior."

Aegir bowed. "Since the king of the gods is pleased with Funfeng, Funfeng is no longer my servant, but the servant of Odin. He shall wait upon the heroes in Valhalla."

With a cry of jealous rage Loki sprang to his feet. "Never!" he cried, and he struck Funfeng so violently that he fell dead.

All the gods leaped up, and they drove Loki from the palace, commanding him never to appear in their presence again; but scarcely had they seated themselves to resume their inter-

rupted feast, when the crafty god again entered the room. Not waiting for them to speak, he began to revile them. His words came in a rapid stream; he stopped not to draw breath. Beginning with Odin, he attacked the gods in turn, mocking their physical peculiarities, recounting every deed which they had done that was not to their credit, shaming them because he had always been able to delude them easily, and because only he could help them out of their difficulties. Finally he came to Sif, Thor's golden-haired wife, whom long before he had robbed of her tresses.

"As for Sif," he began, "I could tell a tale of her that—"

But he went no further, for a peal of thunder drowned his words, and a blinding flash of lightning made him cover his eyes with his hands. The gods sighed in relief, for Thor stood among them, his eyes shooting fire.

"Already," he cried, "has Aegir's palace been stained with blood to-day. I will not, therefore, kill you here. But if ever you appear before my eyes again, I shall smite you; and if ever you dare to speak Sif's name, I shall hear it though I am in the uttermost parts of the earth, and I shall have vengeance."

"Well spoken, son Thor," said Odin. "But I too have something to say to Loki. We shall permit you to go unharmed to-day, but if you care for your life, hide yourself. We shall seek you; and the gods have keen eyes. And if we find you out, you shall die."

Sullen, frightened, Loki withdrew. He wandered about long in the most barren, desolate parts of the earth, cursing the gods and hating himself. At length he found a spot which he felt sure would be hidden even from Odin's eyes. It was in a steep, rocky valley, where nothing grew, and where no sound ever came except the weird noise of the wind as it swept through the narrow passes, and the chatter of a mountain stream as it leapt down the rocks.

Here, in this solitary place, Loki built himself a hut of piled-up rocks. Four walls had the hut, and in each wall was a door, for Loki wished to be able to see the gods, from whatever direction they approached, and to make his escape. He had always been a famous fisherman, and now the fish which he took from the stream formed his only food.

Sometimes he changed himself into a salmon and floated about in the quieter places of the stream. He never talked with the other fish who lived in the stream, but somehow he felt less lonely with those living things about him than he did in his solitary hut on the mountain side.

One day (for Loki was a very clever workman) he began to fashion something, the like of which there had not been in the world before. This was a net for fishing; and so interested did Loki become in twisting and knotting the cords, that he almost forgot to keep watch for his enemies, the gods. The net was almost finished, when one afternoon Loki raised his head and

saw through one of his doors three gods approaching—Odin, Thor and Heimdal, wisest of the gods. With a curse he tossed his net upon the fire—"*They* shall never have it!"—and slipped from his hut. Splash! And there was a huge salmon deep down in the stream, while Loki was nowhere to be seen.

The gods were greatly disappointed when they entered the hut; they had been so sure that at last they had found the hiding place of the wicked one, and it seemed they had missed him again. However, they knew his power of disguising himself, and they were not utterly discouraged.

"He has not been gone long," said Heimdal, "for look—the fire still burns. And what is this upon the fire?" And he drew out the partly burned fish net.

"What can it be?" asked Odin. "It is too coarse for any sort of covering for the body, and not strong enough to use in entangling an enemy."

"Wait!" said Heimdal. "I have it—I have it! It's a net for fishing—Loki was always a fisherman. See," he continued excitedly, "you take it *so*," thrusting one end into Thor's hand, "and you drag it through the water *so*. The water runs through and the fish are held. O, clever Loki!"

"But why," asked Thor, "should he burn it up, when he has spent so much work upon it?"

"I don't know," said Heimdal musingly, "unless—unless—. Where could he hide except

in that stream, and how could he conceal himself there without changing himself to a fish? Mark my words, Loki is there, and he feared we might catch him with his own net."

"That," said Odin, "would be a form of justice for which one would scarcely dare hope. I fear the net is too badly burned for use."

"Not so," replied Heimdal. "Here is more flax, and we can easily repair the damage the fire has done."

So the three gods sat upon the floor of the hut and mended the burned net, keeping an eye always on the stream, that Loki might not make his escape. And when the net was ready they went forth, and with it dragged the stream. Not a fish did they catch, for Loki had frightened the real fish away, and he himself was hiding between two big stones, so that the net passed over him.

"The thing is too light," said Thor. "It does not touch the bottom."

"That we can soon change," replied Heimdal, and he set about fastening stones to the lower edge of the net.

Again they began to drag the river, and this time Loki feared that he could not escape. But just as the net almost touched him, he gave a mighty leap and sprang clear of the net. The silvery flash, the sudden splash, startled the gods, so that they almost dropped the net; but it told them what they wanted to know—Loki *was* in the stream. Turning, they dragged the net down the stream, driving Loki nearer and

THOR'S HAND GRIPPED HIM

nearer to the sheer drop of the waterfall, down which he dared not plunge. Desperate, he made another leap, and again he almost escaped; but Thor's quick eyes saw him, Thor's strong, iron-gloved hand gripped him. The great salmon struggled, but Thor held it fast by the tail, and finally flung it out upon the bank.

Loki, within the fish, vowed to himself that he would not return to his own shape; but the fish's body could not live long out of the water, and soon he found himself growing weak and

faint. At length, therefore, he was obliged to assume his own form, and there he stood, handsome, but evil-looking, before the waiting gods

"It hurts us," said Odin, "that we should be forced to treat one of our own kind in this way. Perhaps even now—tell us that you do regret your past wickedness, that you are sorry for the trouble you have caused the gods, that you grieve sometimes for Balder's death."

"I grieve," said Loki, "only that I have caused so little trouble among the gods; I regret only that the days for pitting my cleverness against your stupidity are at an end—for I ask for no mercy. As for Balder's death, it has been my chief cause for rejoicing as I have dwelt here in this solitary place."

Shocked by his hardness, the gods led him away to the punishment which they had planned for him. The other gods met them by the way, and troops of dwarfs and elves and human beings and animals sprang up on every side, and followed them. And in the hearts of all these followers there was joy, for Loki had never done them anything but harm; and besides, had he not slain Balder, the beautiful, the beloved? But in the hearts of the gods there was pain, for Loki was of their own number, and far back in the beginnings of time, before he had become wicked, he had been their great pride, by reason of his cleverness.

They passed, a noisy procession, to a dark, underground cavern, a damp, slimy place, where snakes looked out from their holes, and toads

THE GODS LED HIM AWAY

sat upon the stones. Here were three sharp-pointed rocks, which Thor pierced with holes; and to these rocks they bound the wretched Loki with chains of adamant.

"Here he shall stay," said Odin, "until the last great day shall come for gods and men."

A giantess, whose son Loki had killed, came with a great serpent, which she fastened directly over Loki's head; and from the serpent's mouth dripped poison, which fell, drop by drop, upon Loki's upturned face. His wife, Sigyn, could not bear to see her husband in such agony, so she took her stand beside him, cup in hand, and caught the poison as it fell. There through the ages on ages she stood, relieving Loki's pain, and trying to cheer him, for whom there was no cheer. When the cup was filled and she had to go to the cavern's mouth to empty it, then the venom fell on Loki's face, and in his terrible pain he struggled and writhed until the earth shook. And all the people, startled at their work or from their sleep, cried, "Loki's earthquake!"

AFTERWHILE*

JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY

Afterwhile we have in view
The old home to journey to;
Where the Mother is, and where
Her sweet welcome waits us there.
How we'll click the latch that locks
In the pinks and hollyhocks,
And leap up the path once more
Where she waits us at the door;
How we'll greet the dear old smile
And the warm tears—afterwhile.

WINDY NIGHTS

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

Whenever the moon and stars are set,
  Whenever the wind is high,
All night long in the dark and wet,
  A man goes riding by.
Late in the night when the fires are out,
Why does he gallop and gallop about?

Whenever the trees are crying aloud,
  And ships are tossed at sea,
By, on the highway, low and loud,
  By at the gallop goes he.
By at the gallop he goes, and then
By he comes back at the gallop again.

* From the poem to *Afterwhiles* by James Whitcomb Riley. Used by special permission of the publishers—*The Bobbs-Merrill Company.*

SHUFFLE-SHOON AND AMBER-LOCKS*

EUGENE FIELD

Shuffle-Shoon and Amber-Locks
Sit together, building blocks;
Shuffle-Shoon is old and gray,
  Amber-Locks a little child.
But together at their play
  Age and Youth are reconciled,
And with sympathetic glee
Build their castles fair to see.

"When I grow to be a man,"
(So the wee one's prattle ran),
  "I shall build a castle so—
    With a gateway broad and grand;
  Here a pretty vine shall grow,
    There a soldier guard shall stand;
  And the tower shall be so high,
  Folks will wonder, by and by!"

Shuffle-Shoon quoth: "Yes, I know;
Thus I builded long ago!
  Here a gate and there a wall,
    Here a window, there a door;
  Here a steeple wondrous tall
    Riseth ever more and more!
  But the years have leveled low
  What I builded long ago!"

From "Love-Songs of Childhood:" Copyright, 1894, by Eugene Field; published by Charles Scribner's Sons.

SHUFFLE-SHOON AND AMBER-LOCKS

So they gossip at their play,
Heedless of the fleeting day;
One speaks of the Long Ago
Where his dead hopes buried lie;
One with chubby cheeks aglow
Prattleth of the By-and-By;
Side by side, they build their blocks—
Shuffle-Shoon and Amber-Locks.

THE SNOW QUEEN

HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN

THE FIRST STORY

Which Treats of the Mirror and Fragments

OOK you, now we're going to begin. When we are at the end of the story we shall know more than we do now, for he was a bad goblin. He was one of the very worst, for he was a demon. One day he was in very good spirits, for he had made a mirror which had this peculiarity, that everything good and beautiful that was reflected in it shrank together into almost nothing, but that whatever was worthless and looked ugly became prominent and looked worse than ever. The most lovely landscapes seen in this mirror looked like boiled spinach, and the best people became hideous, or stood on their heads and had no bodies; their faces were so distorted as to be unrecognizable, and a single freckle was shown spread out over nose and mouth. That was very amusing, the demon said. When good, pious thoughts passed through any person's mind these were again shown in the mirror, so that the demon chuckled at his artistic invention.

Those who visited the goblin school—for he kept a goblin school—declared everywhere that a wonder had been wrought. For now, they

asserted, one could see, for the first time, how the world and the people in it really looked. Now they wanted to fly up to heaven, to sneer and scoff at the angels themselves. The higher they flew with the mirror, the more it grinned; they could scarcely hold it fast. They flew higher and higher, and then the mirror trembled so terribly amid its grinning that it fell down out of their hands to the earth, where it was shattered into a hundred million million and more fragments.

And now this mirror occasioned much more unhappiness than before; for some of the fragments were scarcely as large as a barleycorn, and these flew about in the world, and whenever they flew into any one's eye they stuck there, and that person saw everything wrongly, or had only eyes for the bad side of a thing, for every little fragment of the mirror had retained the power which the whole glass possessed. A few persons even got a fragment of the mirror into their hearts, and that was terrible indeed, for such a heart became a block of ice. A few fragments of the mirror were so large that they were used as window panes, but it was a bad thing to look at one's friends through these panes; other pieces were made into spectacles, and then it went badly when people put on these spectacles to see rightly, and to be just; and then the demon laughed till his paunch shook, for it tickled him so. But without, some little fragments of glass still floated about in the air—and now we shall hear.

THE SECOND STORY

A Little Boy and a Little Girl

IN the great town, where there are many houses, and so many people that there is not room enough for every one to have a little garden, and where consequently most persons are compelled to be content with flowers in pots, were two poor children who possessed a garden somewhat larger than a flowerpot. They were not brother and sister, but they loved each other quite as much as if they had been. Their parents lived just opposite each other in two garrets, there where the roof of one neighbor's house joined that of another. And where the water pipe ran between the two houses was a little window; one had only to step across the pipe to get from one window to the other.

The parents of each child had a great box, in which grew kitchen herbs that they used, and a little rosebush; there was one in each box, and they grew famously. Now, it occurred to the parents to place the boxes across the pipe, so that they reached from one window to another, and looked quite like two embankments of flowers. Pea plants hung down over the boxes, and the rosebushes shot forth long twigs, which clustered round the windows and bent down toward each other: it was almost like a triumphal arch of flowers and leaves. As the boxes were very high, and the children knew

that they might not creep upon them, they often obtained permission to step out upon the roof behind the boxes, and to sit upon their little stools under the roses, and there they could play capitally.

In the winter time there was an end of this amusement. The windows were sometimes quite frozen over. But then they warmed copper shillings on the stove, and held the warm coins against the frozen pane; and this made a capital peep-hole, so round! so round! and behind it gleamed a pretty mild eye at each window; and these eyes belonged to the little boy and the little girl. His name was Kay and the little girl's was Gerda.

In the summer they could get to one another at one bound; but in the winter they had to go down and up the long staircase, while the snow was pelting without.

"Those are the white bees swarming," said the old gradmother.

"Have they a queen bee?" asked the little boy. For he knew that there is one among the real bees.

"Yes, they have one," replied grandmamma. "She always flies where they swarm thickest. She is the largest of them all, and never remains quiet upon the earth; she flies up again into the black cloud. Many a midnight she is flying through the streets of the town, and looks in at the windows, and then they freeze in such a strange way, and look like flowers."

"Yes, I've seen that!" cried both the children; and now they knew that it was true.

THERE THEY COULD PLAY CAPITALLY

"Can the Snow Queen come in here?" asked the little girl.

"Only let her come," cried the boy; "I'll set her upon the warm stove, and then she'll melt."

But grandmother smoothed his hair, and told some other tales. In the evening, when little Kay was at home and half undressed, he clambered upon the chair by the window, and looked through the little hole. A few flakes of snow were falling outside, and one of them, the largest of them all, remained lying on the edge of one of the flower boxes. The snowflake grew larger and larger, and at last became a maiden clothed in the finest white gauze, put together of millions of starry flakes. She was beautiful and delicate, but of ice—of shining, glittering ice. Yet she was alive; her eyes flashed like two clear stars, but there was no peace or rest in them. She nodded toward the window, and beckoned with her hand. The little boy was frightened, and sprang down from the chair; then it seemed as if a great bird flew by outside, in front of the window.

Next day there was a clear frost, and then the spring came; the sun shone, the green sprouted forth, the swallows built nests, the windows were opened, and the little children again sat in their garden high up in the roof, over all the floors.

How splendidly the roses bloomed this summer! The little girl had learned a psalm, in which mention was made of roses; and, in speaking of roses, she thought of her own; and she sang it to the little boy, and he sang, too:

"The roses will fade and pass away,
But we the Christ-child shall see one day."

And the little ones held each other by the hand, kissed the roses, looked at God's bright sunshine, and spoke to it, as if the Christ-child were there. What splendid summer days those were! How beautiful it was without, among the fresh rosebushes!

Kay and Gerda sat and looked at the picture book of beasts and birds. Then it was, while the clock was just striking twelve on the church tower, that Kay said:

"Oh! something struck my heart and pricked me in the eye." The little girl fell upon his neck; he blinked his eyes. No, there was nothing at all to be seen.

"I think it is gone," said he; but it was not gone. It was just one of those glass fragments which sprang from the mirror—the magic mirror that we remember well, the ugly glass that made every great and good thing which was mirrored in it to seem small and mean, but in which the mean and the wicked things were brought out in relief, and every fault was noticeable at once. Poor little Kay had also received a splinter just in his heart, and that will now soon become like a lump of ice. It did not hurt him now, but the splinter was still there.

"Why do you cry?" he asked. "You look ugly like that. There's nothing the matter with me. Oh, fie!" he suddenly exclaimed, "that rose is worm-eaten, and this one is quite crooked.

After all, they're ugly roses. They're like the box in which they stand."

And then he kicked the box with his foot, and tore both the roses off.

"Kay, what are you about?" cried the little girl.

And when he noticed her fright he tore off another rose, and then sprang in at his own window, away from pretty little Gerda.

When she afterward came with her picture book, he said it was only fit for babies in arms; and when his grandmother told stories he always came in with a *but;* and when he could manage it, he would get behind her, put on a pair of spectacles, and talk just as she did; he could do that very cleverly, and the people laughed at him. Soon he could mimic the speech and the gait of everybody in the street. Everything that was peculiar or ugly about people, Kay would imitate; and every one said, "That boy must certainly have a remarkable genius." But it was the glass that struck deep in his heart; so it happened that he even teased little Gerda, who loved him with all her heart.

His games now became quite different from what they were before; they became quite sensible. One winter's day when it snowed he came out with a great burning glass, held up the blue tail of his coat, and let the snowflakes fall upon it.

"Now look at the glass, Gerda," said he.

And every flake of snow was magnified, and looked like a splendid flower, or a star with ten points—it was beautiful to behold.

"See how clever that is," said Kay. "That's much more interesting than real flowers; and there's not a single fault in it—they're quite regular until they begin to melt."

Soon after, Kay came in thick gloves, and with his sledge upon his back. He called up to Gerda, "I've got leave to go into the great square, where the other boys play;" and he was gone.

In the great square the boldest among the boys often tied their sledges to the country people's carts, and thus rode with them a good way. They went capitally. When they were in the midst of their playing there came a great sledge. It was painted quite white, and in it sat somebody wrapped in a rough, white fur, with a white, rough cap on his head. The sledge drove twice round the square, and Kay bound his little sledge to it, and so he drove on with it. It went faster and faster, straight into the next street. The man who drove turned round and nodded in a familiar way to Kay; it was as if they knew one another. Each time when Kay wanted to cast loose his little sledge, the stranger nodded again, and then Kay remained where he was, and thus they drove out at the town gate. Then the snow began to fall so rapidly that the boy could not see a hand's breadth before him; but still he drove on. Now he hastily dropped the cord, so as to get loose from the great sledge; but that was no use, for his sledge was fast bound to the other, and they went on like the wind. Then he called

out quite loudly, but nobody heard him; and the snow beat down, and the sledge flew onward. Every now and then it gave a jump, and they seemed to be flying over hedges and ditches. The boy was quite frightened. He wanted to say his prayer, but could remember nothing but the multiplication table.

The snowflakes became larger and larger; at last they looked like white fowls. All at once they sprang aside, the great sledge stopped, and the person who had driven it rose up. The fur and the cap were made altogether of ice. It was *a lady*, tall and slender, and brilliantly white: it was the Snow Queen!

"We have driven well!" said she. "But why do you tremble with cold? Creep into my fur."

And she seated him beside her in her own sledge, and wrapped the fur round him, and he felt as if he sank into a snowdrift.

"Are you still cold?" asked she, and then she kissed him on the forehead.

Oh, that was colder than ice; it went quite through to his heart, half of which was already a lump of ice. He felt as if he were going to die, but only for a moment; for then he seemed quite well, and he did not notice the cold all about him.

"My sledge! Don't forget my sledge."

That was the first thing he thought of; and it was bound fast to one of the white chickens, and this chicken flew behind him with the sledge upon its back. The Snow Queen kissed Kay

IT WAS THE SNOW QUEEN

again, and then he had forgotten little Gerda, his grandmother, and all at home.

"Now you shall have no more kisses," said she, "for if you did I should kiss you to death."

Kay looked at her. She was so beautiful, he could not imagine a more sensible or lovely face; she did not appear to him to be made of ice now, as she did when she sat at the window and beckoned to him. In his eyes she was perfect;

he did not feel at all afraid. He told her that he could do mental arithmetic as far as fractions; that he knew the number of square miles and the number of inhabitants in the country. And she always smiled, and then it seemed to him that what he knew was not enough. And he looked up into the wide sky, and she flew with him high up upon the black cloud, and the storm blew and whistled; it seemed as though the wind sang old songs. They flew over woods and lakes, over sea and land; below them the cold wind roared, the wolves howled, the snow crackled; over them flew the black, screaming crows; but above all the moon shone bright and clear, and Kay looked at the long, long winter night; by day he slept at the feet of the Queen.

THE THIRD STORY

The Flower Garden of the Woman who could Conjure

BUT how did it fare with little Gerda when Kay did not return? What could have become of him? No one knew, no one could give information. The boys only told that they had seen him bind his sledge to another very large one, which had driven along the street and out at the town gate. Nobody knew what had become of him; many tears were shed, and little Gerda especially wept long and bitterly. Then she said he was dead—he had been drowned in the river

which flowed close by their school. Oh, those were very dark, long winter days! But now spring came, with warmer sunshine.

"Kay is dead and gone," said little Gerda.

"I don't believe it," said the Sunshine.

"He is dead and gone," said she to the Sparrows.

"We don't believe it," they replied; and at last little Gerda did not believe it herself.

"I will put on my new red shoes," she said one morning—"those that Kay has never seen; and then I will go down to the river, and ask for him."

It was still very early; she kissed the old grandmother, who was still asleep, put on her red shoes, and went quite alone out of the town gate toward the river.

"Is it true that you have taken my little playmate from me? I will give you my red shoes if you will give him back to me."

And it seemed to her as if the waves nodded quite strangely; and then she took her red shoes, which she liked best of anything she possessed, and threw them both into the river; but they fell close to the shore, and the little wavelets carried them back to her, to the land. It seemed as if the river would not take from her the dearest things she possessed because he had not her little Kay. But she thought she had not thrown the shoes far enough out, so she crept into a boat that lay among the reeds, went to the other end of the boat, and threw the shoes from thence into the water; but the boat was not bound fast,

and at the movement she made it glided away from the shore. She noticed it, and hurried to get back; but before she reached the other end, the boat was a yard from the bank, and it drifted away faster than before.

Then little Gerda was very much frightened, and began to cry; but no one heard her except the Sparrows, and they could not carry her to land; but they flew along by the shore, and sang, as if to console her, "Here we are! here we are!" The boat drove on with the stream, and little Gerda sat quite still, with only her stockings on her feet; her little red shoes floated along behind her, but they could not come up to the boat, for that made more way.

It was very pretty on both shores. There were beautiful flowers, old trees, and slopes with sheep and cows; but not *one* person was to be seen.

"Perhaps the river will carry me to little Kay," thought Gerda.

And then she became more cheerful, and rose up, and for many hours she watched the charming green banks; then she came to a great cherry orchard, in which stood a little house with remarkable blue and red windows; it had a thatched roof, and without stood two wooden soldiers, who presented arms to those who sailed past.

Gerda called to them, for she thought they were alive, but of course they did not answer. She came quite close to them. The river carried the boat toward the shore.

Gerda called still louder, and then there came

out of the house an old woman leaning on a crutch; she had on a great velvet hat, painted over with the finest flowers.

"You poor little child!" said the old woman. "How did you manage to come on the great rolling river, and to float thus far out into the world?"

And then the old woman went quite into the water, seized the boat with her crutch stick, drew it to land, and lifted little Gerda out. And Gerda was glad to be on dry land again, though she felt a little afraid of the strange old woman.

"Come and tell me who you are, and how you came here," said the old lady. And Gerda told her everything; and the old woman shook her head, and said, "Hem! hem!" And when Gerda had told everything, and asked if she had not seen little Kay, the woman said that he had not yet come by, but that he probably would soon come. Gerda was not to be sorrowful, but to look at the flowers and taste the cherries, for they were better than any picture book, for each one of them could tell a story. Then she took Gerda by the hand and led her into the little house, and locked the door.

The windows were very high, and the panes were red, blue and yellow; the daylight shone in a remarkable way, with different colors. On the table stood the finest cherries, and Gerda ate as many of them as she liked, for she had leave to do so. While she was eating them, the old lady combed Gerda's hair with a golden

THE OLD LADY COMBED HER HAIR

comb, and the yellow hair hung softly round the friendly little face, which looked as blooming as a rose.

"I have long wished for such a dear little girl as you," said the old lady. "Now you shall see how well we shall live with one another."

And as the ancient dame combed her hair, Gerda forgot her adopted brother Kay more and more; for this old woman could conjure, but she was not a wicked witch. She only practiced a little magic for her own amusement, and wanted to keep little Gerda. Therefore she went into the garden, stretched out her crutch

toward all the rosebushes, and, beautiful as they were, they all sank into the earth, and one could not tell where they had stood. The old woman was afraid that, if the little girl saw roses, she would think of her own, and remember little Kay, and run away.

Now Gerda was led out into the flower garden. What fragrance was there, and what loveliness! Every conceivable flower was there in full bloom; there were some for every season; no picture book could be gayer and prettier. Gerda jumped high for joy, and played till the sun went down behind the high cherry trees; then she was put into a lovely bed, with red silk pillows stuffed with blue violets, and she slept there, and dreamed as gloriously as a queen on her wedding day.

Next day she played again with the flowers in the warm sunshine; and thus many days went by. Gerda knew every flower; but, many as there were of them, it still seemed to her as if one were wanting, but which one she did not know. One day she sat looking at the old lady's hat with the painted flowers, and the prettiest of them all was a rose. The old lady had forgotten to efface it from her hat when she caused the others to disappear. But so it always is when one does not keep one's wits about one.

"What, are there no roses here?" cried Gerda.

And she went among the beds, and searched and searched, but there was not one to be found. Then she sat down and wept; her tears fell just upon a spot where a rosebush lay buried, and

when the warm tears moistened the earth, the tree at once sprouted up as blooming as when it had sunk; and Gerda embraced it, and kissed the roses, and thought of the beautiful roses at home, and also of little Kay.

"Oh, how I have been detained!" said the little girl. "I wanted to seek for little Kay! Do you not know where he is?" she asked the roses. "Do you think he is dead?"

"He is not dead," the roses answered. "We have been in the ground. All the dead people are there, but Kay is not there."

"Thank you," said little Gerda, and she went to the other flowers, looked into their cups, and asked, "Do you know where little Kay is?"

But every flower stood in the sun thinking only of her own story or fancy tale. Gerda heard many, many, of them; but not one knew anything of Kay.

And what did the Tiger Lily say?

"Do you hear the drum, 'Rub-dub'? There are only two notes, always 'rub-dub'! Hear the mourning song of the women; hear the call of the priests. The Hindoo widow stands in her long red mantle on the funeral pile; the flames rise up around her and her dead husband; but the Hindoo woman is thinking of the living one here in the circle, of him whose eyes burn hotter than flames, whose fiery glances have burned into her soul more ardently than the flames themselves, which are soon to burn her body to ashes. Can the flame of the heart die in the flame of the funeral pile?"

"I don't understand that at all!" said little Gerda.

"That's my story," said the Lily.

What says the Convolvulus?

"Over the narrow road looms an old knightly castle; thickly the ivy grows over the crumbling red walls, leaf by leaf up to the balcony, where stands a beautiful girl; she bends over the balustrade and glances up the road. No rose on its branch is fresher than she; no apple blossom wafted onward by the wind floats more lightly along. How her costly silks rustle! 'Comes he not yet?' "

"Is it Kay whom you mean?" asked little Gerda.

"I'm only speaking of a story—my dream," replied the Convolvulus.

What said the little Snowdrop?

"Between the trees a long board hangs by ropes; that is a swing. Two pretty little girls, with clothes white as snow and long green silk ribbons on their hats, are sitting upon it, swinging. Their brother, who is greater than they, stands in the swing, and has slung his arm round the rope to hold himself, for in one hand he has a little saucer, and in the other a clay pipe. He is blowing bubbles. The swing flies, and the bubbles rise with beautiful, changing colors; the last still hangs from the pipe bowl, swaying in the wind. The swing flies on; the little black dog, light as the bubbles, stands up on his hind legs, and wants to be taken into the swing; it flies on, and the dog falls, barks, and

grows angry, for he is teased, and the bubble bursts. A swinging board and a bursting bubble—that is my song."

"It may be very pretty, what you're telling, but you speak it so mournfully, and you don't mention little Kay at all."

What do the Hyacinths say?

"There were three beautiful sisters, transparent and delicate. The dress of one was red, that of the second blue, and that of the third quite white; hand in hand they danced by the calm lake in the bright moonlight. They were not elves; they were human beings. It was so sweet and fragrant there! The girls disappeared in the forest, and the sweet fragrance became stronger: three coffins, with three beautiful maidens lying in them, glided from the wood-thicket across the lake; the glowworms flew gleaming about them like little hovering lights. Are the dancing girls sleeping, or are they dead? The flower scent says they are dead, and the evening bell tolls their knell."

"You make me quite sorrowful," said little Gerda. "You scent so strongly, I cannot help thinking of the dead maidens. Ah! is little Kay really dead? The Roses have been down in the earth, and they say he is not."

"Kling! klang!" tolled the Hyacinth bells. "We are not tolling for little Kay—we don't know him; we only sing our song, the only one we know."

And Gerda went to the Buttercup, gleaming forth from the green leaves.

"You are a little bright sun," said Gerda. "Tell me, if you know, where I may find my companion."

And the Buttercup shone so gaily, and looked back at Gerda. What song might the Buttercup sing? It was not about Kay.

"In a little courtyard the clear sun shone warm on the first day of spring. The sunbeams glided down the white wall of the neighboring house; close by grew the first yellow flower, glancing like gold in the bright sun's ray. The old grandmother sat out of doors in her chair; her granddaughter, a poor, handsome maid-servant, was coming home for a short visit. She kissed her grandmother. There was gold, heart's gold, in that blessed kiss—gold in the mouth, gold in the south, gold in the morning hour. See, that's my little story," said the Buttercup.

"My poor old grandmother!" sighed Gerda. "Yes, she is surely longing for me and grieving for me, just as she did for little Kay. But I shall soon go home and take Kay with me. There is no use of my asking the flowers; they know only their own song, and give me no information." And then she tied her little frock round her, that she might run the faster; but the Jonquil struck against her leg as she sprang over it, and she stopped to look at the tall yellow flower, and asked, "Do you, perhaps, know anything of little Kay?"

And she bent quite down to the flower, and what did it say?

"I can see myself! I can see myself!" said

the Jonquil. "Oh! oh! how I smell! Up in the little room in the gable stands a little dancing girl. She stands sometimes on one foot, sometimes on both; she seems to tread on all the world. She's nothing but an ocular delusion: she pours water out of a teapot on a bit of stuff —it is her bodice. 'Cleanliness is a fine thing,' she says; her white frock hangs on a hook; it has been washed in the teapot too, and dried on the roof. She puts it on and ties her saffron handkerchief round her neck, and the dress looks all the whiter. Point your toes! look how she seems to stand on a stalk. I can see myself! I can see myself!"

"I don't care at all about that," said Gerda "You need not tell me that."

And then she ran to the end of the garden. The door was locked, but she pressed against the rusty lock, and it broke off, the door sprang open, and little Gerda ran with naked feet out into the wide world. She looked back three times, but no one was there to pursue her. At last she could run no longer, and seated herself on a great stone; and when she looked round the summer was over—it was late in autumn. One could not notice that in the beautiful garden, where there was always sunshine, and where the flowers of every season always bloomed.

"Alas! how I have loitered!" said little Gerda. "Autumn has come. I may not rest again."

And she rose up to go on. Oh! how sore and tired her little feet were. All around it looked cold and bleak; the long willow leaves were quite

yellow, and the dew fell down like water; one leaf after another dropped; only the sloe-thorn still bore fruit, but the sloes were sour, and set the teeth on edge. Oh! how gray and gloomy it looked—the wide world!

THE FOURTH STORY

The Prince Who Might Have Been Kay

GERDA was compelled to rest again; then there came hopping across the snow, just opposite the spot where she was sitting, a great Crow. This Crow stopped a long time to look at her, nodding its head, and then it said, "Krah! krah! Good day! good day!" It could not pronounce better, but it felt friendly toward the little girl, and asked where she was going all alone in the wide world. The word "alone" Gerda understood very well, and felt how much it expressed; and she told the Crow the story of her whole life and fortunes, and asked if it had not seen Kay.

And the Crow nodded very gravely, and said:

"That may be! that may be!"

"What? do you think so?" cried the little girl, and nearly pressed the Crow to death, she kissed it so.

"Gently, gently!" said the Crow. "I think I know. I believe it may be little Kay; but he has certainly forgotten you, with the princess."

"Does he live with a princess?" asked Gerda.

THE CROW STOPPED TO LOOK AT HER

"Yes; listen," said the Crow. "But it's so difficult for me to speak your language. If you know the crow's language, I can tell it much better."

"No, I never learned it," said Gerda; "but my grandmother understood it, and could speak the language, too. I only wish I had learned it."

"That doesn't matter," said the Crow. "But it will go badly."

And then the Crow told what it knew.

"In the country in which we now are lives a princess who is quite wonderfully clever; but then she has read all the newspapers in the world, and has forgotten them again, she is so clever. Lately she was sitting on the throne—and that's

not so pleasant as is generally supposed—and she began to sing a song, and it was just this: 'Why should I not marry now?' You see, there was something in that," said the Crow. "And so she wanted to marry, but she wished for a husband who could answer when he was spoken to, not one who only stood and looked handsome, for that was wearisome. And so she had all her maids of honor summoned, and when they heard her intention they were very glad. 'I like that,' said they; 'I thought the very same thing the other day.' You may be sure that every word I am telling you is true," added the Crow. "I have a tame sweetheart who goes about freely in the castle, and she told me everything."

Of course the sweetheart was a crow, for one crow always finds out another, and birds of a feather flock together.

"Newspapers were published directly, with a border of hearts and the princess's initials. One could read in them that every young man who was good-looking might come to the castle and speak with the princess, and him who spoke so that one could hear he was at home there, and who spoke best, the princess would choose for her husband. Yes, yes," said the Crow, "you may believe me. It's as true as that I sit here. Young men came flocking in; there was a great crowding and much running to and fro, but no one succeeded the first or second day. They could all speak well when they were out in the streets, but when they entered at the palace

gates, and saw the guards standing in their silver lace, and went up the staircase, and saw the lackeys in their golden liveries, and the great lighted halls, they became confused. And when they stood before the throne itself, on which the princess sat, they could do nothing but repeat the last word she had spoken, and she did not care to hear her own words again. It was just as if the people in there had taken some narcotic and fallen asleep till they got into the street again, for not till then were they able to speak. There stood a whole row of them, from the town gate to the palace gate. I went out myself to see it," said the Crow. "They were hungry and thirsty, but in the palace they did not receive so much as a glass of lukewarm water. A few of the wisest had brought bread and butter with them, but they would not share with their neighbors, for they thought, 'Let him look hungry, and the princess won't have him.' "

"But Kay, little Kay?" asked Gerda. "When did he come? Was he among the crowd?"

"Wait! wait! We're just coming to him. It was on the third day that there came a little personage, without horse or carriage, walking quite merrily up to the castle. His eyes sparkled like yours; he had fine long hair, but his clothes were shabby."

"That was Kay!" cried Gerda, rejoicing. "Oh, then, I have found him!" And she clapped her hands.

"He had a little knapsack on his back," observed the Crow.

"No, that must certainly have been his sledge," said Gerda, "for he went away with a sledge."

"That may well be," said the Crow, "for I did not look at it very closely. But this much I know from my tame sweetheart, that when he passed under the palace gate and saw the life guards in silver, and mounted the staircase and saw the lackeys in gold, he was not in the least embarrassed. He nodded, and said to them, 'It must be tedious work standing on the stairs —I'd rather go in.' The halls shone full of light; privy councilors and Excellencies walked about with bare feet, and carried golden vessels; any one might have become solemn; and his boots creaked most noisily, but he was not embarrassed."

"That is certainly Kay!" cried Gerda. "He had new boots on; I've heard them creak in grandmother's room."

"Yes, certainly they creaked," resumed the Crow. "And he went boldly in to the princess herself, who sat on a pearl that was as big as a spinning wheel, and all the maids of honor with their attendants, and all the cavaliers with their followers, and the followers of their followers, who themselves kept a page apiece, were standing round; and the nearer they stood to the door, the prouder they looked. The followers' followers' pages could hardly be looked at, so proudly did they stand in the doorway!"

"That must be terrible!" faltered little Gerda. "And yet Kay won the princess?"

"If I had not been a crow, I would have married her myself, notwithstanding that I am engaged. They say he spoke as well as I can when I speak the crows' language; I heard that from my tame sweetheart. He was merry and agreeable; he had not come to marry, only to hear the wisdom of the princess; and he approved of her, and she of him."

"Yes, certainly that was Kay!" said Gerda. "He was so clever; he could do mental arithmetic up to fractions. Oh! won't you lead me to the castle, too?"

"That's easily said," replied the Crow. "But how are we to manage it? I'll talk it over with my tame sweetheart: she can probably advise us; for this I must tell you—a little girl like yourself will never get leave to go completely in."

"Yes, I shall get leave," said Gerda. "When Kay hears that I'm there he'll come out directly, and bring me in."

"Wait for me yonder at the grating," said the Crow; and it wagged its head and flew away.

It was late in the evening when the Crow came back.

"Rax! rax!" it said. "I'm to greet you kindly from my sweetheart, and here's a little loaf for you. She took it from the kitchen. There's plenty of bread there, and you must be hungry. You can't possibly get into the palace, for you are barefooted, and the guards in silver and the lackeys in gold would not allow it. But don't cry; you shall go up. My sweetheart

knows a little back staircase that leads up to the bedroom, and she knows where she can get the key."

And they went into the garden, into the great avenue, where one leaf was falling down after another; and when the lights were extinguished in the palace, one after the other, the Crow led Gerda to a back door, which stood ajar.

Oh, how Gerda's heart beat with fear and longing! It was just as if she had been going to do something wicked; and yet she only wanted to know whether it was little Kay. Yes, it must be he. She thought so deeply of his clear eyes and his long hair; she could fancy she saw how he smiled, as he had smiled at home when they sat among the roses. He would certainly be glad to see her; to hear what a long distance she had come for his sake; to know how sorry they had all been at home when he did not come back. Oh, what a fear and what a joy that was!

Now they were on the staircase. A little lamp was burning upon a cupboard, and in the middle of the floor stood the tame Crow, turning her head on every side and looking at Gerda, who courtesied as her grandmother had taught her to do.

"My betrothed has spoken to me very favorably of you, my little lady," said the tame Crow. "Your history, as it may be called, is very moving. Will you take the lamp? then I will precede you. We will go the straight way, and then we shall meet nobody."

"I feel as if some one were coming after us," said Gerda, as something rushed by her. It seemed like a shadow on the wall; horses with flying manes and thin legs, hunters, and ladies and gentlemen on horseback.

"These are only dreams," said the Crow; "they are coming to carry the high masters' thoughts out hunting. That's all the better, for you may look at them the more closely, in bed. But I hope, when you are taken into favor and get promotion, you will show a grateful heart."

"Of that we may be sure!" observed the Crow from the wood.

Now they came into the first hall; it was hung with rose-colored satin, and artificial flowers were worked on the walls. And here the dreams again came flitting by them, but they moved so quickly that Gerda could not see the high-born lords and ladies. Each hall was more splendid than the last; yes, one could almost become bewildered! Now they were in the bedchamber. Here the ceiling was like a great palm tree with leaves of glass, of costly glass, and in the middle of the floor two beds hung on a thick stalk of gold, and each of them looked like a lily. One of them was white, and in that lay the princess; the other was red, and in that Gerda was to seek little Kay. She bent one of the red leaves aside, and then she saw a little brown neck. Oh, that was Kay! She called out his name quite loud, and held the lamp toward him. The dreams rushed into the room again on horseback—he awoke, turned his head, and—it was not little Kay!

The prince was only like him in the neck, but he was young and good-looking; and the princess looked up, blinking, from the white lily, and asked who was there. Then little Gerda wept, and told her whole history, and all that the Crows had done for her.

"You poor child!" said the prince and princess.

And they praised the Crows, and said that they were not angry with them at all, but the Crows were not to do it again. However, they should be rewarded.

"Will you fly out free," asked the princess, "or will you have fixed positions as court Crows, with the right to everything that is left in the kitchen?"

And the two Crows bowed, and begged for fixed positions, for they thought of their old age, and said, "It is so good to have some provisions for one's old days," as they called them.

And the prince got up out of his bed, and let Gerda sleep in it, and he could not do more than that. She folded her little hands and thought, "How good men and animals are!" and then she shut her eyes and went quietly to sleep. All the dreams came flying in again, looking like angels, and they drew a little sledge, on which Kay sat nodding; but all this was only a dream, and therefore it was gone again as soon as she awoke.

The next day she was clothed from head to foot in velvet; and an offer was made to her that she should stay in the castle and enjoy pleasant

times, but she only begged for a little carriage, with a horse to draw it, and a pair of little boots; then she would drive out into the world and seek for Kay.

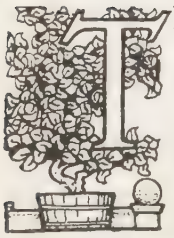
And she received not only boots, but a muff likewise, and was neatly dressed; and when she was ready to depart, a coach, made of pure gold, stopped before the door. Upon it shone like a star the coat of arms of the prince and princess; coachmen, footmen, and outriders—for there were outriders, too—sat on horseback, with gold crowns on their heads. The prince and princess themselves helped her into the carriage, and wished her all good fortune. The forest Crow, who was now married, accompanied her the first three miles; he sat by Gerda's side, for he could not bear riding backward; the other Crow stood in the doorway, flapping her wings; she did not go with them, for she suffered from headache that had come on since she had obtained a fixed position and was allowed to eat too much. The coach was lined with sugar biscuits, and in the seat there were gingerbread, nuts, and fruit.

"Farewell, farewell!" cried the prince and princess; and little Gerda wept, and the Crow wept.

So they went on for the first three miles, and then the Crow said good-bye, and that was the heaviest parting of all. The Crow flew up on a tree, and beat his black wings as long as he could see the coach, which glittered like the bright sunshine.

THE FIFTH STORY

The Little Robber Girl



THEY drove on through the thick forest, but the coach gleamed like a torch. It dazzled the robbers' eyes, and they could not bear it.

"That is gold! that is gold!" cried they; and they rushed forward, seized the horses, killed the postilions, the coachmen, and the footmen, and then pulled little Gerda out of the carriage.

"She is fat—she is pretty—she is fed with nut kernels!" said the old robber woman, who had a very long matted beard and shaggy eyebrows that hung down over her eyes. "She's as good as a little pet lamb; how I shall relish her!"

And she drew out her shining knife, that gleamed in a horrible way.

"Oh!" screamed the old woman at the same moment: for her own daughter, who hung at her back, bit her ear in a very naughty and spiteful manner. "You ugly brat!" screamed the old woman; and she had not time to kill Gerda.

"She shall play with me!" said the little robber girl. "She shall give me her muff and her pretty dress, and sleep with me in my bed!"

And then the girl gave another bite, so that the woman jumped high up, and turned right round, and all the robbers laughed, and said:

"Look how she dances with her calf."

"I want to go into the carriage," said the little robber girl.

And she would have her own way, for she was spoiled and very obstinate; and she and Gerda sat in the carriage, and drove over stock and stone deep into the forest. The little robber girl was as big as Gerda, but stronger and more broad-shouldered, and she had a brown skin; her eyes were quite black, and they looked almost mournful. She clasped little Gerda round the waist, and said:

"They shall not kill you as long as I am not angry with you. I suppose you are a princess?"

"No," replied Gerda. And she told all that had happened to her, and how fond she was of little Kay.

The robber girl looked at her seriously, nodded slightly, and said:

"They shall not kill you, even if I do get angry with you, for then I will do it myself."

And then she dried Gerda's eyes, and put her two hands into the beautiful muff that was so soft and warm.

Now the coach stopped, and they were in the courtyard of a robber castle. It had burst from the top to the ground; ravens and crows flew out of the great holes, and big bulldogs—each of which looked as if he could devour a man—jumped high up, but did not bark, for that was forbidden.

In the great, old, smoky hall, a bright fire burned upon the stone floor; the smoke passed along under the ceiling, and had to seek an exit

for itself. A great cauldron of soup was boiling and hares and rabbits were roasting on the spit.

"You shall sleep to-night with me and all my little animals," said the robber girl.

They had something to eat and drink, and then went to a corner, where straw and carpets were spread out. Above these sat on laths and perches more than a hundred pigeons, and all seemed asleep, but they turned a little when the two little girls came.

"All these belong to me," said the little robber girl; and she quickly seized one of the nearest, held it by the feet, and shook it so that it flapped its wings. "Kiss it!" she cried, and beat it in Gerda's face. "There sit the wood rascals," she continued, pointing to a number of laths that had been nailed in front of a hole in the wall. "Those are wood rascals, those two; they fly away directly if one does not keep them well locked up. And here's my old sweetheart 'Ba.'" And she pulled out by the horn a Reindeer, that was tied up, and had a polished copper ring round its neck. "We're obliged to keep him tight, too, or he'd run away from us. Every evening I tickle his neck with a sharp knife, and he's badly frightened at that."

And the little girl drew a long knife from a cleft in the wall, and let it glide over the Reindeer's neck; the poor creature kicked out its legs, and the little robber girl laughed, and drew Gerda into bed with her.

"Do you keep the knife while you're asleep?"

asked Gerda, and looked at it in rather a frightened way.

"I always sleep with my knife," replied the robber girl. "One does not know what may happen. But now tell me again what you told me just now about little Kay, and why you came out into the wide world."

And Gerda told it again from the beginning; and the Wood Pigeons cooed above them in their cage, and the other pigeons slept. The little robber girl put her arm round Gerda's neck, held her knife in the other hand, and slept so that one could hear her; but Gerda could not close her eyes at all—she did not know whether she was to live or die.

The robbers sat round the fire, sang and drank, and the old robber woman tumbled about. It was quite terrible for a little girl to behold.

Then the Wood Pigeons said: "Coo! coo! we have seen little Kay. A white owl was carrying his sledge; he sat in the Snow Queen's carriage, which drove close by the forest as we lay in our nests. She blew upon us young pigeons, and all died except us two. Coo! coo!"

"What are you saying there?" asked Gerda. "Whither was the Snow Queen traveling? Do you know anything about it?"

"She was probably journeying to Lapland, for there they have always ice and snow. Ask the Reindeer that is tied to the cord."

"There is ice and snow yonder, and it is glorious and fine" said the Reindeer. "There

one may run about free in great glittering plains. There the Snow Queen has her summer tent; but her strong castle is up toward the North Pole, on the island that's called Spitzbergen."

"O Kay, little Kay!" cried Gerda.

"You must lie still," exclaimed the robber girl, "or I shall thrust my knife into your body."

In the morning Gerda told her all that the Wood Pigeons had said, and the robber girl looked quite serious, and nodded her head and said, "That's all the same, that's all the same!"

"Do you know where Lapland is?" she asked the Reindeer.

"Who should know better than I?" the creature replied, and its eyes sparkled in its head. "I was born and bred there; I ran about there in the snow fields."

"Listen!" said the robber girl to Gerda. "You see all our men have gone away. Only mother is here still, and she'll stay; but toward noon she drinks out of the big bottle, and then she sleeps for a little while; then I'll do something for you."

Then she sprang out of bed, and clasped her mother round the neck and pulled her beard, crying:

"Good morning, my own old nanny goat." And her mother filliped her nose till it was red and blue; and it was all done for pure love.

When the mother had drunk out of her bottle and had gone to sleep upon it, the robber girl went to the Reindeer, and said:

"I should like very much to tickle you a few

GERDA ON THE REINDEER'S BACK

times more with the knife, for you are very funny then; but it's all the same. I'll loosen your cord and help you out, so that you may run to Lapland; but you must use your legs well, and carry this little girl to the palace of the Snow Queen, where her playfellow is. You've heard what she told me, for she spoke loud enough, and you were listening."

The Reindeer sprang up high for joy. The robber girl lifted little Gerda on its back, and had the forethought to tie her fast, and even to give her her own little cushion as a saddle.

"There are your fur boots for you," she said, "for it's growing cold; but I shall keep the muff, for that's so very pretty. Still, you shall not be cold, for all that; here's my mother's big muffles

—they'll just reach up to your elbows. Now you look just like my ugly mother."

And Gerda wept for joy.

"I can't bear to see you whimper," said the little robber girl. "No, you just ought to look very glad. And here are two loaves and a ham for you; now you won't be hungry."

These were tied on the Reindeer's back. The little robber girl opened the door, coaxed in all the big dogs, and then cut the rope with her sharp knife, and said to the Reindeer:

"Now run, but take good care of the little girl."

And Gerda stretched out her hands with the big muffles toward the little robber girl, and said, "Farewell."

And the Reindeer ran over stock and stone, away through the great forest, over marshes and steppes, as fast as it could go. The wolves howled, and the ravens croaked. "Hiss! hiss!" sounded through the air. It seemed as if the sky were flashing fire.

"Those are my old Northern Lights," said the Reindeer. "Look how they glow!" And then it ran on faster than ever, day and night.

THE SIXTH STORY

The Lapland Woman and the Finland Woman

AT a little hut they stopped. It was very humble; the roof sloped down almost to the ground, and the door was so low that the family had to creep on their stomachs when they wanted to go in or out. No one was in the house but an old Lapland woman, cooking fish by the light of a train-oil lamp; and the Reindeer told Gerda's whole history, but it related its own first, for this seemed to the Reindeer the more important of the two. Gerda was so exhausted by the cold that she could not speak.

"Oh, you poor things," said the Lapland woman; "you've a long way to run yet! You must go more than a hundred miles into Finmark, for the Snow Queen is there, staying in the country, and burning Bengal Lights every evening. I'll write a few words on a dried cod, for I have no paper, and I'll give you that as a letter to the Finland woman; she can give you better information than I."

And when Gerda had been warmed and refreshed with food and drink, the Lapland woman wrote a few words on a dried codfish, and telling Gerda to take care of these, tied her again on the Reindeer, and the Reindeer sprang away. Flash! flash! The whole night long the most beautiful blue Northern Lights were burning.

And then they got to Finmark, and knocked

at the chimney of the Finland woman; for she had not even a hut.

There was such a heat in the chimney that the woman herself went about almost naked. She at once loosened little Gerda's dress and took off the child's muffles and boots; otherwise it would have been too hot for her to bear. Then she laid a piece of ice on the Reindeer's head, and read what was written on the codfish; she read it three times, and when she knew it by heart, she popped the fish into the soup-cauldron, for it was eatable, and she never wasted anything.

Now the Reindeer first told his own story, and then little Gerda's; and the Finland woman blinked with her clever eyes, but said nothing.

"You are very clever," said the Reindeer. "I know you can tie all the winds of the world together with a bit of twine; if the seaman unties one knot, he has a good wind; if he loosens the second, it blows hard; but if he unties the third and fourth, there comes such a tempest that the forests are thrown down. Won't you give the little girl a draught, so that she may get twelve men's power, and overcome the Snow Queen?"

"Twelve men's power!" repeated the Finland woman. "Great use that would be!"

And she went to a bed and brought out a great rolled-up fur, and unrolled it; wonderful characters were written upon it, and the Finland woman read until the perspiration ran down over her forehead.

But the Reindeer again begged so hard for

little Gerda, and Gerda looked at the Finland woman with such beseeching eyes, full of tears, that she began to blink again with her own, and drew the Reindeer into a corner, and whispered to him, while she laid fresh ice upon his head.

"Little Kay is certainly at the Snow Queen's, and finds everything there to his taste and liking, and thinks it is the best place in the world; but that is because he has a splinter of glass in his eye, and a little fragment in his heart; but these must be got out, or he will never be a human being again, and the Snow Queen will keep her power over him."

"But cannot you give something to little Gerda, so as to give her power over all this?"

"I can give her no greater power than she possesses already; don't you see how great that is? Don't you see how men and animals are obliged to serve her, and how she gets on so well in the world, with her naked feet? She cannot receive her power from us; it consists in this—that she is a dear, innocent child. If she herself cannot penetrate to the Snow Queen and get the glass out of little Kay, we can be of no use! Two miles from here the Snow Queen's garden begins; you can carry the little girl thither; set her down by the great bush that stands with its red berries in the snow. Don't stand gossiping, but make haste, and get back here!"

And then the Finland woman lifted little Gerda on the Reindeer, which ran as fast as it could.

"Oh, I haven't my boots! I haven't my muffles!" cried Gerda.

She soon noticed that in the cutting cold; but the Reindeer dared not stop. It ran till it came to the bush with the red berries; there it set Gerda down, and kissed her on the mouth, and great big tears ran down the creature's cheeks; and then it ran back, as fast as it could. There stood poor Gerda without shoes, without gloves, in the midst of the terrible, cold Finmark.

She ran forward as fast as possible; then came a whole regiment of snowflakes; but they did not fall down from the sky, for that was quite bright, and shone with the Northern Lights: the snowflakes ran along the ground, and the nearer they came, the larger they grew. Gerda still remembered how large and beautiful the snowflakes had appeared when she had looked at them through the burning glass. But here they were certainly far larger and much more terrible—they were alive. They were advance posts of the Snow Queen, and had the strangest shapes. A few looked like ugly great porcupines; others like knots formed of snakes, which stretched forth their heads; and others like little fat bears, whose hair stood up on end; all were brilliantly white, all were living snowflakes.

Then little Gerda said her prayer; and the cold was so great that she could see her own breath, which went forth out of her mouth like smoke. The breath became thicker and thicker, and formed itself into little angels, who grew and grew whenever they touched the earth; and

all had helmets on their heads, and shields and spears in their hands. Their number increased more and more, and when Gerda had finished her prayer a whole legion stood round about her. and struck with their spears at the terrible snowflakes, so that these were shattered into a thousand pieces; and little Gerda could go forward afresh, with good courage. The angels stroked her hands and feet, and then she felt less how cold it was, and hastened on to the Snow Queen's palace.

But now we must see what Kay was doing. He certainly was not thinking of little Gerda, and least of all that she was standing in front of the palace.

THE SEVENTH STORY

Of the Snow Queen's Castle, and What Happened There at Last

THE walls of the palace were formed of the drifting snow, and the windows and doors of the cutting winds. There were more than a hundred halls all blown together by the snow; the greatest of these extended for several miles; the strong Northern Lights illuminated them all, and how great and empty, how icily cold and shining they all were! Never was merriment there—not even a little bear's ball, at which the storm could have played the music, while the bears walked about on their hind legs and showed off their pretty manners; never any little sport of mouth-

slapping or bars-touch: never any little coffee gossip among the young lady white foxes. Empty, vast, and cold were the halls of the Snow Queen. The Northern Lights flamed so brightly that one could count them where they stood highest and lowest. In the midst of this immense empty snow hall was a frozen lake, which had burst into a thousand pieces; but each piece was like the rest, so that it was a perfect work of art: and in the middle of the lake sat the Snow Queen, when she was at home, and then she said that she sat in the Mirror of Reason, and that this was the only one, and the best in the world.

Little Kay was quite blue with cold—indeed, almost black! but he did not notice it, for she had kissed the cold shudderings away from him, and his heart was like a lump of ice. He dragged a few sharp, flat pieces of ice to and fro, joining them together in all kinds of ways, for he wanted to achieve something with them. It was just like when we have little tablets of wood, and lay them together to form figures—what we call the Chinese game. Kay also went and laid figures, and, indeed, very artistic ones. That was the icy game of Reason. In his eyes these figures were very remarkable and of the highest importance; that was because of the fragment of glass sticking in his eye. He laid out the figures so that they formed a word—but he could never manage to lay down the word as he wished to have it—the word *eternity*. The Snow Queen had said:

"If you can find out this figure, you shall be your own master, and I will give you the whole world and a pair of new skates."

But he could not.

"Now I'll hasten away to the warm lands," said the Snow Queen. "I will go and look into the black spots." These were the volcanoes, Etna and Vesuvius, as they are called. "I shall whiten them a little! That's necessary; that will do the grapes and lemons good."

And the Snow Queen flew away, and Kay sat quite alone in the great icy hall that was miles in extent, and looked at his pieces of ice, and thought so deeply that cracks were heard inside him; one would have thought that he was frozen.

Then it happened that little Gerda stepped through the great gate into the wide hall. Here reigned cutting winds, but she prayed a prayer, and the winds lay down as if they would have gone to sleep; and she stepped into the great, empty, cold halls, and beheld Kay; she knew him, and flew to him, and embraced him, and held him fast, and called out:

"Kay, dear little Kay! I have found you!"

But he sat quite still, stiff and cold. Then little Gerda wept hot tears, that fell upon his breast; they penetrated into his heart, they thawed the lump of ice, and consumed the little piece of glass in it. He looked at her, and she sang:

"The roses will fade and pass away,
But we the Christ-child shall see one day."

Then Kay burst into tears; he wept so that the splinter of glass came out of his eye. Now he recognized her, and cried rejoicingly:

"Gerda, dear Gerda! where have you been all this time? And where have I been?" And he looked all around him. "How cold it is here! How large and void!"

And he clung to Gerda, and she laughed and wept for joy. It was so glorious that even the pieces of ice round about danced for joy; and when they were tired and lay down, they formed themselves into just the letters of which the Snow Queen had said that if he found them out he should be his own master, and she would give him the whole world and a new pair of skates.

And Gerda kissed his cheeks, and they became blooming; she kissed his eyes, and they shone like her own; she kissed his hands and feet, and he then became well and merry. The Snow Queen might now come home; his word of release stood written in shining characters of ice.

And they took one another by the hand, and wandered forth from the great palace of ice. They spoke of the grandmother and of the roses on the roof; and where they went the winds rested and the sun burst forth; and when they came to the bush with the red berries, the Reindeer was standing there waiting; it had brought another young Reindeer, which gave the children warm milk, and kissed them on the mouth. Then they carried Kay and Gerda, first to the

GERDA KISSED HIS CHEEK

Finnish woman, where they warmed themselves thoroughly in the hot room, and received instructions for their journey home; and then to the Lapland woman, who had made them new clothes and put their sledge in order.

The Reindeer and the young one sprang at their side, and followed them as far as the boundary of the country. There the first green sprouted forth, and there they took leave of the

two Reindeer and the Lapland woman. "Farewell!" said all. And the first little birds began to twitter, the forest was decked with green buds, and out of it, on a beautiful horse (which Gerda knew, for it was the same that had drawn her golden coach) a young girl came riding, with a shining red cap on her head and a pair of pistols in the holsters. This was the little robber girl, who had grown tired of staying at home, and wished to go first to the north, and if that did not suit her, to some other region. She knew Gerda at once, and Gerda knew her too; and it was a right merry meeting.

"You are a fine fellow to gad about!" she said to little Kay. "I should like to know if you deserve that one should run to the end of the world after you?"

But Gerda patted her cheeks, and asked after the prince and princess.

"They've gone to foreign countries," said the robber girl.

"But the Crow?" said Gerda.

"The Crow is dead," answered the other. "The tame one has become a widow, and goes about with an end of black worsted thread round her leg. She complains most lamentably, but it's all talk. But now tell me how you have fared, and how you caught him."

And Gerda and Kay told their story.

"Snipp-snapp-snurre-purre-basellurre!" said the robber girl.

And she took them both by the hand, and promised that if she ever came through their

town, she would come up and pay them a visit. And then she rode away into the wide world.

But Gerda and Kay went hand in hand, and as they went it became beautiful spring, with green and with flowers. The church bells sounded, and they recognized the high steeples and the great town; it was the one in which they lived, and they went to the grandmother's door, and up the stairs, and into the room, where everything remained in its usual place. The big clock was going "Tick! tack!" and the hands were turning; but as they went through the rooms they noticed that they had become grown-up people. The roses out on the roof-gutter were blooming in at the open window, and there stood the children's chairs, and Kay and Gerda sat upon the chairs, and held each other by the hand. They had forgotten the cold, empty splendor at the Snow Queen's like a heavy dream. The grandmother was sitting in God's bright sunshine, and read aloud out of the Bible, "Except ye become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of God."

And Kay and Gerda looked into each other's eyes, and all at once they understood the old song:

"The roses will fade and pass away,
But we the Christ-child shall see one day."

There they both sat, grown up, and yet children—children in heart; and it was summer—warm, delightful summer.

HOW TO REMEMBER THE STORY

When we read a good long story like *The Snow Queen*, we enjoy it and think we should like to remember it. If it is really good we ought to remember it, not only because of its excellence, but, in the case of an old story, because we so often find allusions to it in our other reading. The best way to fix a story in mind is to make an outline of the incidents, or plot. Then we can see the whole thing almost at a glance, and so remembrance is made easy.

A good outline of *The Snow Queen* would appear something like this:

I. The Goblin's Mirror. (Enlarges evil; distorts and diminishes good.)
   1. The Mirror is broken.

II. Kay and Gerda.
   1. The little rose garden.
   2. Pieces of the mirror find their way into Kay's eye and heart.
   3. The Snow Queen.
      a. Finds Kay.
      b. Carries him away.
      c. Makes him forget Gerda.

III. Gerda's Search for Kay.
   1. Carried away by the river.
   2. Rescued by the old witch.

IV. In the Flower garden.
   1. The rose reminds Gerda of Kay.
   2. Gerda questions the flowers.
      a. The Tiger Lily.
      b. The Convolvulus.

c. The Snowdrop.
d. The Hyacinth.
e. The Buttercup.
f. The Jonquil.

V. Gerda Continues Her Search in Autumn.
1. Gerda meets the Crow and follows him.
a. The princess's castle.
b. The prince is not Kay.
c. Gerda in rich clothes continues her search in a carriage.

VI. Gerda meets the Robbers.
1. The old woman claims Gerda.
2. The robber girl fancies Gerda.
3. The Wood Pigeons tell about Kay.
4. The Reindeer carries Gerda on her search.

VII. Gerda's Journey on the Reindeer.
1. The Lapland woman.
a. Cares for Gerda.
b. Sends message on a codfish.
2. The Finland woman.
a. Cares for Gerda.
b. Tells what has happened to Kay.
c. Tells what ails Kay and says Kay may be saved by the power of innocent girlhood.

VIII. Kay's Rescue.
1. At the Snow Queen's palace.
a. Kay cannot write *eternity*.
b. The Snow Queen leaves for Italy.

c. Gerda finds Kay.
d. Her tears melt his icy heart.
e. Her song brings tears that clear his eyes.
f. Kay knows Gerda.
g. Pieces of ice spell the word *eternity*.
h. Gerda's kisses restore Kay to warmth and health.

2. The return journey.
   a. The reindeer.
   b. The Finland woman.
   c. The Lapland woman.
   d. The prince and princess.
   e. The robber girl.
3. Gerda and Kay at home.

A GOOD LESSON TO LEARN

There is little use in reading if we do not get from it something that makes us wiser, better or nobler, or that gives us an inspiration to work harder and make more of ourselves. I think the author of *The Snow Queen* meant that we should get something more than a half-hour's enjoyment out of his beautiful story.

He makes us like little Kay and his sweet friend Gerda, and then saddens us with Kay's misfortunes. We do not like to see him become crossgrained, mean in disposition and stony hearted.

Then we learn to admire the faithfulness and courage and bravery of Gerda, and follow her

to the Snow Queen's palace, afraid every moment she will not find Kay.

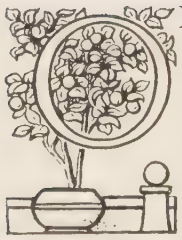
When she does find him, it is her tears of sympathy that melt his icy heart, her sweet faith in the Christ-child that clears his eyes, and her love that brings him back to life.

Of course this is all a fairy story about people that never lived, and it tells us things that never happened; but children and all the race of grown-ups, even, may learn that it is only by innocence, sympathy and love that the wickedness in the world can be overcome.

"Except ye become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of God," quoted the wise old grandmother.

THE CHIMERA

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE



ONCE, in the old, old times (for all the strange things which I tell you about happened long before anybody can remember), a fountain gushed out of a hillside in the marvelous land of Greece. And, for aught I know, after so many thousand years it is still gushing out of the very selfsame spot. At any rate, there was the pleasant fountain welling freshly forth and sparkling adown the hillside in the golden sunset when a handsome young man named Bellerophon drew near its margin. In his hand he held a bridle studded with brilliant gems and adorned with a golden bit. Seeing an old man and another of middle age and a little boy near the fountain, and likewise a maiden who was dipping up some of the water in a pitcher, he paused and begged that he might refresh himself with a draught.

"This is very delicious water," he said to the maiden as he rinsed and filled her pitcher after drinking out of it. "Will you be kind enough to tell me whether the fountain has any name?"

"Yes, it is called the Fountain of Pirene," answered the maiden; and then she added, "My grandmother has told me that this clear fountain was once a beautiful woman; and when

her son was killed by the arrows of the huntress Diana, she melted all away into tears. And so the water which you find so cool and sweet is the sorrow of that poor mother's heart!"

"I should not have dreamed," observed the young stranger, "that so clear a wellspring, with its gush and gurgle and its cheery dance out of the shade into the sunlight, had so much as one tear-drop in its bosom. And, this, then, is Pirene? I thank you, pretty maiden, for telling me its name. I have come from a far-away country to find this very spot."

A middle-aged country fellow (he had driven his cow to drink out of the spring) stared hard at young Bellerophon and at the handsome bridle which he carried in his hand.

"The watercourses must be getting low, friend, in your part of the world," remarked he, "if you come so far only to find the Fountain of Pirene. But pray, have you lost a horse? I see you carry the bridle in your hand; and a very pretty one it is, with that double row of bright stones upon it. If the horse was as fine as the bridle, you are much to be pitied for losing him."

"I have lost no horse," said Bellerophon with a smile, "but I happen to be seeking a very famous one, which, as wise people have informed me, must be found hereabouts if anywhere. Do you know whether the winged horse Pegasus still haunts the Fountain of Pirene, as he used to do?"

But then the country fellow laughed.

Some of you, my little friends, have probably heard that this Pegasus was a snow-white steed with beautiful silvery wings, who spent most of his time on the summit of Mount Helicon. He was as wild and as swift and as buoyant in his flight through the air as any eagle that ever soared into the clouds. There was nothing else like him in the world. He had no mate, he had never been backed or bridled by a master, and for many a long year he led a solitary and a happy life.

Oh, how fine a thing it is to be a winged horse! Sleeping at night, as he did, on a lofty mountain top, and passing the greater part of the day in the air, Pegasus seemed hardly to be a creature of the earth. Whenever he was seen up very high above people's heads, with the sunshine on his silvery wings, you would have thought that he belonged to the sky, and that, skimming a little too low, he had got astray among our mists and vapors and was seeking his way back again. It was very pretty to behold him plunge into the fleecy bosom of a bright cloud and be lost in it for a moment or two, and then break forth from the other side. Or in a sullen rainstorm, when there was a gray pavement of clouds over the whole sky, it would sometimes happen that the winged horse descended right through it, and the glad light of the upper region would gleam after him. In another instant, it is true, both Pegasus and the pleasant light would be gone away together. But any one that was fortunate

enough to see this wondrous spectacle felt cheerful the whole day afterward, and as much longer as the storm lasted.

In the summer time and in the most beautiful of weather Pegasus often alighted on the solid earth, and, closing his silvery wings, would gallop over hill and dale for pastime as fleetly as the wind. Oftener than in any other place he had been seen near the Fountain of Pirene, drinking the delicious water or rolling himself upon the soft grass of the margin. Sometimes, too (but Pegasus was very dainty in his food), he would crop a few of the clover-blossoms that happened to be sweetest.

To the Fountain of Pirene, therefore, people's great-grandfathers had been in the habit of going (as long as they were youthful and retained their faith in winged horses) in hopes of getting a glimpse at the beautiful Pegasus. But of late years he had been very seldom seen. Indeed, there were many of the country folks dwelling within half an hour's walk of the fountain who had never beheld Pegasus, and did not believe that there was any such creature in existence. The country fellow to whom Bellerophon was speaking chanced to be one of those incredulous persons.

And that was the reason why he laughed.

"Pegasus, indeed!" cried he, turning up his nose as high as such a flat nose could be turned up. "Pegasus, indeed! A winged horse, truly! Why, friend, are you in your senses? Of what use would wings be to a horse? Could

he drag the plow so well, think you? To be sure, there might be a little saving in the expense of shoes, but then how would a man like to see his horse flying out of the stable window? —yes, or whisking him up above the clouds when he only wanted to ride to mill? No, no! I don't believe in Pegasus. There never was such a ridiculous kind of a horse-fowl made!"

"I have reason to think otherwise," said Bellerophon quietly.

And then he turned to an old gray man who was leaning on a staff and listening very attentively with his head stretched forward and one hand at his ear, because for the last twenty years he had been getting rather deaf.

"And what say you, venerable sir?" inquired he. "In your younger days, I should imagine, you must frequently have seen the winged steed."

"Ah, young stranger, my memory is very poor," said the aged man. "When I was a lad, if I remember rightly, I used to believe there was such a horse, and so did everybody else. But nowadays I hardly know what to think, and very seldom think about the winged horse at all. If I ever saw the creature, it was a long, long while ago; and, to tell you the truth, I doubt whether I ever did see him. One day, to be sure, when I was quite a youth, I remember seeing some hoof-prints round about the brink of the fountain. Pegasus might have made those hoof-marks, and so might some other horse."

"And have you never seen him, my fair maiden?" asked Bellerophon of the girl, who stood with the pitcher on her head while this talk went on. "You surely could see Pegasus if anybody can, for your eyes are very bright."

"Once I thought I saw him," replied the maiden, with a smile and a blush. "It was either Pegasus or a large white bird a very great way up in the air. And one other time, as I was coming to the fountain with my pitcher, I heard a neigh. Oh, such a brisk and melodious neigh as that was! My very heart leaped with delight at the sound. But it startled me, nevertheless, so that I ran home without filling my pitcher."

"That was truly a pity!" said Bellerophon.

And he turned to the child whom I mentioned at the beginning of the story, and who was gazing at him, as children are apt to gaze at strangers, with his rosy mouth wide open.

"Well, my little fellow," cried Bellerophon, playfully pulling one of his curls, "I suppose you have often seen the winged horse."

"That I have," answered the child very readily. "I saw him yesterday and many times before."

"You are a fine little man!" said Bellerophon, drawing the child closer to him. "Come, tell me all about it."

"Why," replied the child, "I often come here to sail little boats in the fountain and to gather pretty pebbles out of its basin. And sometimes, when I look down into the water, I see

the image of the winged horse in the picture of the sky that is there. I wish he would come down and take me on his back and let me ride him up to the moon. But if I so much as stir to look at him, he flies far away, out of sight."

And Bellerophon put his faith in the child who had seen the image of Pegasus in the water, and in the maiden who had heard him neigh so melodiously, rather than in the middle-aged clown who believed only in cart horses, or in the old man who had forgotten the beautiful things of his youth.

Therefore he haunted about the Fountain of Pirene for a great many days afterward. He kept continually on the watch, looking upward at the sky or else down into the water, hoping forever that he should see either the reflected image of the winged horse or the marvelous reality. He held the bridle with its bright gems and golden bit always ready in his hand. The rustic people who dwelt in the neighborhood and drove their cattle to the fountain to drink would often laugh at poor Bellerophon, and sometimes take him pretty severely to task. They told him that an able-bodied young man like himself ought to have better business than to be wasting his time in such an idle pursuit. They offered to sell him a horse if he wanted one, and when Bellerophon declined the purchase they tried to drive a bargain with him for his fine bridle.

Even the country boys thought him so very foolish that they used to have a great deal of

sport about him, and were rude enough not to care a fig although Bellerophon saw and heard it. One little urchin, for example, would play Pegasus, and cut the oddest imaginable capers by way of flying, while one of his schoolfellows would scamper after him holding forth a twist of bulrushes which was intended to represent Bellerophon's ornamental bridle. But the gentle child who had seen the picture of Pegasus in the water comforted the young stranger more than all the naughty boys could torment him. The dear little fellow in his play-hours often sat down beside him, and, without speaking a word, would look down into the fountain and up toward the sky with so innocent a faith that Bellerophon could not help feeling encouraged.

Now, you will perhaps wish to be told why it was that Bellerophon had undertaken to catch the winged horse, and we shall find no better opportunity to speak about this matter than while he is waiting for Pegasus to appear.

If I were to relate the whole of Bellerophon's previous adventures, they might easily grow into a very long story. It will be quite enough to say that in a certain country of Asia a terrible monster called a Chimera had made its appearance, and was doing more mischief than could be talked about between now and sunset. According to the best accounts which I have been able to obtain, this Chimera was nearly, if not quite, the ugliest and most poisonous creature, and the strangest and unaccountablest, and the hardest to fight with and the most difficult

to run away from, that ever came out of the earth's inside. It had a tail like a boa constrictor, its body was like I do not care what, and it had three separate heads, one of which was a lion's, the second a goat's, and the third an abominably great snake's; and a hot blast of fire came flaming out of each of its three mouths. Being an earthly monster, I doubt whether it had any wings; but, wings or no, it ran like a goat and a lion, and wriggled along like a serpent, and thus contrived to make about as much speed as all the three together.

Oh, the mischief and mischief and mischief that this naughty creature did! With its flaming breath it could set a forest on fire or burn up a field of grain, or, for that matter, a village with all its fences and houses. It laid waste the whole country round about, and used to eat up people and animals alive, and cook them afterward in the burning oven of its stomach. Mercy on us, little children! I hope neither you nor I will ever happen to meet a Chimera.

While the hateful beast (if a beast we can anywise call it) was doing all these horrible things, it so chanced that Bellerophon came to that part of the world on a visit to the king. The king's name was Iobates, and Lycia was the country which he ruled over. Bellerophon was one of the bravest youths in the world, and desired nothing so much as to do some valiant and beneficent deed, such as would make all mankind admire and love him. In those days the only way for a young man to distinguish himself

was by fighting battles, either with the enemies of his country or with wicked giants or with troublesome dragons or with wild beasts, when he could find nothing more dangerous to encounter. King Iobates, perceiving the courage of his youthful visitor, proposed to him to go and fight the Chimera, which everybody else was afraid of, and which, unless it should be soon killed, was likely to convert Lycia into a desert. Bellerophon hesitated not a moment, but assured the king that he would either slay this dreaded Chimera or perish in the attempt.

But, in the first place, as the monster was so prodigiously swift, he bethought himself that he should never win the victory by fighting on foot. The wisest thing he could do. therefore, was to get the very best and fleetest horse that could anywhere be found. And what other horse in all the world was half so fleet as the marvelous horse Pegasus, who had wings as well as legs, and was even more active in the air than on the earth? To be sure, a great many people denied that there was any such horse with wings, and said that the stories about him were all poetry and nonsense. But, wonderful as it appeared, Bellerophon believed that Pegasus was a real steed, and hoped that he himself might be fortunate enough to find him; and once fairly mounted on his back, he would be able to fight the Chimera at better advantage.

And this was the purpose with which he had traveled from Lycia to Greece and had brought the beautifully ornamented bridle in his hand.

It was an enchanted bridle. If he could only succeed in putting the golden bit into the mouth of Pegasus, the winged horse would be submissive, and would own Bellerophon for his master, and fly whithersoever he might choose to turn the rein.

But, indeed, it was a weary and anxious time while Bellerophon waited and waited for Pegasus, in hopes that he would come and drink at the fountain of Pirene. He was afraid lest King Iobates should imagine that he had fled from the Chimera. It pained him, too, to think how much mischief the monster was doing, while he himself, instead of fighting with it, was compelled to sit idly poring over the bright waters of Pirene as they gushed out of the sparkling sand. And as Pegasus came thither so seldom in these latter years, and scarcely alighted there more than once in a lifetime, Bellerophon feared that he might grow an old man, and have no strength left in his arms nor courage in his heart, before the winged horse would appear. Oh, how heavily passes the time while an adventurous youth is yearning to do his part in life and to gather in the harvest of his renown! How hard a lesson it is to wait! Our life is brief, and how much of it is spent in teaching us only this!

Well was it for Bellerophon that the gentle child had grown so fond of him and was never weary of keeping him company. Every morning the child gave him a new hope to put in his bosom instead of yesterday's withered one.

"Dear Bellerophon," he would cry, looking up hopefully into his face, "I think we shall see Pegasus to-day."

And at length, if it had not been for the little boy's unwavering faith, Bellerophon would have given up all hope, and would have gone back to Lycia and have done his best to slay the Chimera without the help of the winged horse. And in that case poor Bellerophon would at least have been terribly scorched by the creature's breath, and would most probably have been killed and devoured. Nobody should ever try to fight an earthborn Chimera unless he can first get upon the back of an aerial steed.

One morning the child spoke to Bellerophon even more hopefully than usual.

"Dear, dear Bellerophon," cried he, "I know not why it is, but I feel as if we should certainly see Pegasus to-day."

And all that day he would not stir a step from Bellerophon's side; so they ate a crust of bread together, and drank some of the water of the fountain. In the afternoon, there they sat, and Bellerophon had thrown his arm around the child, who likewise had put one of his little hands into Bellerophon's. The latter was lost in his own thoughts, and was fixing his eyes vacantly on the trunks of the trees that overshadowed the fountain, and on the grapevines that clambered up among their branches. But the gentle child was gazing down into the water; he was grieved, for Bellerophon's sake, that the hope of another day should be deceived like so

many before it, and two or three quiet tear-drops fell from his eyes and mingled with what were said to be the many tears of Pirene, when she wept for her slain children.

But, when he least thought of it, Bellerophon felt the pressure of the child's little hand and heard a soft, almost breathless, whisper:

"See there, dear Bellerophon! There is an image in the water."

The young man looked down into the dimpling mirror of the fountain, and saw what he took to be the reflection of a bird which seemed to be flying at a great height in the air, with a gleam of sunshine on its snowy or silvery wings.

"What a splendid bird it must be!" said he. "And how very large it looks, though it must really be flying higher than the clouds!"

"It makes me tremble," whispered the child. "I am afraid to look up into the air. It is very beautiful, and yet I dare only look at its image in the water. Dear Bellerophon, do you not see that it is no bird? It is the winged horse Pegasus."

Bellerophon's heart began to throb. He gazed keenly upward, but could not see the winged creature, whether bird or horse, because just then it had plunged into the fleecy depths of a summer cloud. It was but a moment, however, before the object reappeared, sinking lightly down out of the cloud, although still at a vast distance from the earth. Bellerophon caught the child in his arms and shrank back with him, so that they were both hidden among

THE IMAGE IN THE WATER

the thick shrubbery which grew all around the fountain. Not that he was afraid of any harm, but he dreaded lest, if Pegasus caught a glimpse of them, he would fly far away and alight in some inaccessible mountain top. For it was really the winged horse. After they had expected him so long, he was coming to quench his thirst with the water of Pirene.

Nearer and nearer came the aerial wonder,

flying in great circles, as you may have seen a dove when about to alight. Downward came Pegasus, in those wide, sweeping circles which grew narrower and narrower still as he gradually approached the earth. The nigher the view of him, the more beautiful he was and the more marvelous the sweep of his silvery wings. At last, with so light a pressure as hardly to bend the grass about the fountain or imprint a hoof-tramp in the sand of its margin, he alighted, and, stooping his wild head, began to drink. He drew in the water with long and pleasant sighs and tranquil pauses of enjoyment, and then another draught, and another, and another. For nowhere in the world or up among the clouds did Pegasus love any water as he loved this of Pirene. And when his thirst was slaked he cropped a few of the honey-blossoms of the clover, delicately tasting them, but not caring to make a hearty meal, because the herbage just beneath the clouds on the lofty sides of Mount Helicon suited his palate better than this ordinary grass.

After thus drinking to his heart's content, and in his dainty fashion condescending to take a little food, the winged horse began to caper to and fro, and dance, as it were, out of mere idleness and sport. There never was a more playful creature made than this very Pegasus. So there he frisked in a way that it delights me to think about, fluttering his great wings as lightly as ever did a linnet, and running little races half on earth and half in air, and which I know not

whether to call a flight or a gallop. When a creature is perfectly able to fly, he sometimes chooses to run just for the pastime of the thing; and so did Pegasus, although it cost him some little trouble to keep his hoofs so near the ground. Bellerophon, meanwhile, holding the child's hand, peeped forth from the shrubbery, and thought that never was any sight so beautiful as this, nor ever a horse's eyes so wild and spirited as those of Pegasus. It seemed a sin to think of bridling him and riding on his back.

Once or twice Pegasus stopped and snuffed the air, pricking up his ears, tossing his head, and turning it on all sides, as if he partly suspected some mischief or other. Seeing nothing, however, and hearing no sound, he soon began his antics again.

At length—not that he was weary, but only idle and luxurious—Pegasus folded his wings and lay down on the soft green turf. But, being too full of aerial life to remain quiet for many moments together, he soon rolled over on his back with his four slender legs in the air. It was beautiful to see him, this one solitary creature whose mate had never been created, but who needed no companion, and, living a great many hundred years, was as happy as the centuries were long. The more he did such things as mortal horses are accustomed to do, the less earthly and the more wonderful he seemed. Bellerophon and the child almost held their breath, partly from a delightful awe, but still more because they dreaded lest the slightest

stir or murmur should send him up with the speed of an arrow-flight into the farthest blue of the sky. Finally, when he had had enough of rolling over and over, Pegasus turned himself about, and, indolently, like any other horse, put out his forelegs in order to rise from the ground; and Bellerophon, who had guessed that he would do so, darted suddenly from the thicket and leaped astride of his back.

Yes, there he sat, on the back of the winged horse!

But what a bound did Pegasus make when, for the first time, he felt the weight of a mortal man upon his loins! A bound, indeed! Before he had time to draw a breath Bellerophon found himself five hundred feet aloft, and still shooting upward, while the winged horse snorted and trembled with terror and anger. Upward he went, up, up, up, until he plunged into the cold, misty bosom of a cloud at which, only a little while before, Bellerophon had been gazing and fancying it a very pleasant spot. Then again, out of the heart of the cloud, Pegasus shot down like a thunderbolt, as if he meant to dash both himself and his rider headlong against a rock. Then he went through about a thousand of the wildest caprioles that had ever been performed either by a bird or a horse.

I cannot tell you half that he did. He skimmed straight forward, and sideways, and backward. He reared himself erect, with his forelegs on a wreath of mist and his hind legs on nothing at all. He flung out his heels be-

hind and put down his head between his legs, with his wings pointing right upward. At about two miles' height above the earth he turned a somersault, so that Bellerophon's heels were where his head should have been, and he seemed to look down into the sky, instead of up. He twisted his head about, and, looking Bellerophon in the face, with fire flashing from his eyes, made a terrible attempt to bite him. He fluttered his pinions so wildly that one of the silver feathers was shaken out, and, floating earthward, was picked up by the child, who kept it as long as he lived in memory of Pegasus and Bellerophon.

But the latter (who, as you may judge, was as good a horseman as ever galloped) had been watching his opportunity, and at last clapped the golden bit of the enchanted bridle between the winged steed's jaws. No sooner was this done than Pegasus became as manageable as if he had taken food all his life out of Bellerophon's hand. To speak what I really feel, it was almost a sadness to see so wild a creature grow suddenly so tame. And Pegasus seemed to feel it so likewise. He looked round to Bellerophon with tears in his beautiful eyes, instead of the fire that so recently flashed from them. But when Bellerophon patted his head and spoke a few authoritative, yet kind and soothing words, another look came into the eyes of Pegasus; for he was glad at heart, after so many lonely centuries, to have found a companion and a master.

Thus it always is with winged horses and with

all such wild and solitary creatures. If you can catch and overcome them, it is the surest way to win their love.

While Pegasus had been doing his utmost to shake Bellerophon off his back, he had flown a very long distance, and they had come within sight of a lofty mountain by the time the bit was in his mouth Bellerophon had seen this mountain before, and knew it to be Helicon, on the summit of which was the winged horse's abode. Thither (after looking gently into his rider's face, as if to ask leave) Pegasus now flew, and, alighting, waited patiently until Bellerophon should please to dismount. The young man accordingly leaped from his steed's back, but still held him fast by the bridle. Meeting his eyes, however, he was so affected by the gentleness of his aspect and by his beauty, and by the thought of the free life which Pegasus had heretofore lived, that he could not bear to keep him a prisoner if he really desired his liberty.

Obeying this generous impulse, he slipped the enchanted bridle off the head of Pegasus and took the bit from his mouth.

"Leave me, Pegasus!" said he. "Either leave me or love me."

In an instant the winged horse shot almost out of sight, soaring straight upward from the summit of Mount Helicon. Being long after sunset, it was now twilight on the mountain top and dusky evening over all the country round about. But Pegasus flew so high that he over-

took the departed day, and was bathed in the upper radiance of the sun. Ascending higher and higher, he looked like a bright speck, and at last could no longer be seen in the hollow waste of the sky. And Bellerophon was afraid that he should never behold him more. But while he was lamenting his own folly the bright speck reappeared, and drew nearer and nearer until it descended lower than the sunshine; and behold, Pegasus had come back! After this trial there was no more fear of the winged horse's making his escape. He and Bellerophon were friends, and put loving faith in one another.

That night they lay down and slept together, with Bellerophon's arm about the neck of Pegasus, not as a caution, but for kindness. And they awoke at peep of day and bade one another good morning, each in his own language.

In this manner Bellerophon and the wondrous steed spent several days, and grew better acquainted and fonder of each other all the time. They went on long aerial journeys, and sometimes ascended so high that the earth looked hardly bigger than the moon. They visited different countries and amazed the inhabitants, who thought that the beautiful young man on the back of the winged horse must have come down out of the sky. A thousand miles a day was no more than an easy space for the fleet Pegasus to pass over. Bellerophon was delighted with this kind of life, and would have liked nothing better than to live always in the same way, aloft in the clear atmosphere; for it

was always sunny weather up there, however cheerless and rainy it might be in the lower region. But he could not forget the horrible Chimera which he had promised King Iobates to slay. So at last, when he had become well accustomed to feats of horsemanship in the air, and could manage Pegasus with the least motion of his hand, and had taught him to obey his voice, he determined to attempt the performance of this perilous adventure.

At daybreak, therefore, as soon as he unclosed his eyes, he gently pinched the winged horse's ear in order to arouse him. Pegasus immediately started from the ground and pranced about a quarter of a mile aloft, and made a grand sweep around the mountain top by way of showing that he was wide awake and ready for any kind of an excursion. During the whole of this little flight, he uttered a loud, brisk, and melodious neigh, and finally came down at Bellerophon's side as lightly as ever you saw a sparrow hop upon a twig.

"Well done, dear Pegasus! well done, my sky-skimmer!" cried Bellerophon, fondly stroking the horse's neck. "And now, my fleet and beautiful friend, we must break our fast. To-day we are to fight the terrible Chimera."

As soon as they had eaten their morning meal and drunk some sparkling water from a spring called Hippocrene, Pegasus held out his head of his own accord so that his master might put on the bridle. Then, with a great many playful leaps and airy caperings, he showed his im-

patience to be gone, while Bellerophon was girding on his sword and hanging his shield about his neck and preparing himself for battle. When everything was ready, the rider mounted, and (as was his custom when going a long distance) ascended five miles perpendicularly, so as the better to see whither he was directing his course. He then turned the head of Pegasus toward the east, and set out for Lycia. In their flight they overtook an eagle, and came so nigh him, before he could get out of their way, that Bellerophon might easily have caught him by the leg. Hastening onward at this rate, it was still early in the forenoon when they beheld the lofty mountains of Lycia with their deep and shaggy valleys. If Bellerophon had been told truly, it was in one of those dismal valleys that the hideous Chimera had taken up its abode.

Being now so near their journey's end, the winged horse gradually descended with his rider, and they took advantage of some clouds that were floating over the mountain tops in order to conceal themselves. Hovering on the upper surface of a cloud and peeping over its edge, Bellerophon had a pretty distinct view of the mountainous part of Lycia, and could look into all its shadowy vales at once. At first there appeared to be nothing remarkable. It was a wild, savage, and rocky tract of high and precipitous hills. In the more level part of the country there were ruins of burned houses, and here and there the carcasses of dead cattle strewn about the pastures where they had been feeding.

"The Chimera must have done this mischief," thought Bellerophon. "But where can the monster be?"

As I have already said, there was nothing remarkable to be detected at first sight in any of the valleys and dells that lay among the precipitous heights of the mountains—nothing at all, unless, indeed, it were three spires of black smoke which issued from what seemed to be the mouth of a cavern and clambered sullenly into the atmosphere. Before reaching the mountain top these three black smoke-wreaths mingled themselves into one. The cavern was almost directly beneath the winged horse and his rider, at the distance of about a thousand feet. The smoke, as it crept heavily upward, had an ugly, sulphurous, stifling scent which caused Pegasus to snort and Bellerophon to sneeze. So disagreeable was it to the marvelous steed (who was accustomed to breathe only the purest air) that he waved his wings and shot half a mile out of the range of this offensive vapor.

But on looking behind him, Bellerophon saw something that induced him first to draw the bridle and then to turn Pegasus about. He made a sign, which the winged horse understood, and sunk slowly through the air until his hoofs were scarcely more than a man's height above the rocky bottom of the valley. In front, as far off as you could throw a stone, was the cavern's mouth with the three smoke-wreaths oozing out of it. And what else did Bellerophon behold there?

There seemed to be a heap of strange and terrible creatures curled up within the cavern. Their bodies lay so close together that Bellerophon could not distinguish them apart; but, judging by their heads, one of these creatures was a huge snake, the second a fierce lion, and the third an ugly goat. The lion and the goat were asleep; the snake was broad awake, and kept staring around him with a great pair of fiery eyes. But—and this was the most wonderful part of the matter—the three spires of smoke evidently issued from the nostrils of these three heads! So strange was the spectacle, that, though Bellerophon had been all along expecting it, the truth did not immediately occur to him that here was the terrible three-headed Chimera. He had found out the Chimera's cavern. The snake, the lion, and the goat, as he supposed them to be, were not three separate creatures, but one monster!

The wicked, hateful thing! Slumbering as two thirds of it were, it still held in its abominable claws the remnant of an unfortunate lamb —or possibly (but I hate to think so) it was a dear little boy—which its three mouths had been gnawing before two of them fell asleep!

All at once Bellerophon started as from a dream, and knew it to be the Chimera. Pegasus seemed to know it at the same instant, and sent forth a neigh that sounded like the call of a trumpet to battle. At this sound the three heads reared themselves erect and belched out great flashes of flame. Before Bellerophon had

time to consider what to do next, the monster flung itself out of the cavern and sprung straight toward him, with its immense claws extended and its snaky tail twisting itself venomously behind. If Pegasus had not been as nimble as a bird, both he and his rider would have been overthrown by the Chimera's headlong rush, and thus the battle have been ended before it was well begun. But the winged horse was not to be caught so. In the twinkling of an eye he was up aloft, halfway to the clouds, snorting with anger. He shuddered, too, not with affright, but with utter disgust at the loathsomeness of this poisonous thing with three heads.

The Chimera, on the other hand, raised itself up so as to stand absolutely on the tip end of its tail, with its talons pawing fiercely in the air and its three heads spluttering fire at Pegasus and his rider. My stars! how it roared and hissed and bellowed! Bellerophon, meanwhile, was fitting his shield on his arm and drawing his sword.

"Now, my beloved Pegasus," he whispered in the winged horse's ear, "thou must help me to slay this insufferable monster, or else thou shalt fly back to thy solitary mountain peak without thy friend Bellerophon. For either the Chimera dies, or its three mouths shall gnaw this head of mine, which has slumbered upon thy neck."

Pegasus whinnied, and, turning back his head, rubbed his nose tenderly against his rider's cheek. It was his way of telling him that,

though he had wings and was an immortal horse, yet he would perish, if it were possible for immortality to perish, rather than leave Bellerophon behind.

"I thank you, Pegasus," answered Bellerophon. "Now, then, let us make a dash at the monster!"

Uttering these words, he shook the bridle, and Pegasus darted down aslant, as swift as the flight of an arrow, right toward the Chimera's threefold head, which all this time was poking itself as high as it could into the air. As he came within arm's length, Bellerophon made a cut at the monster, but was carried onward by his steed before he could see whether the blow had been successful. Pegasus continued his course, but soon wheeled round at about the same distance from the Chimera as before. Bellerophon then perceived that he had cut the goat's head of the monster almost off, so that it dangled downward by the skin, and seemed quite dead.

But, to make amends, the snake's head and the lion's head had taken all the fierceness of the dead one into themselves, and spit flame and hissed and roared with a vast deal more fury than before.

"Never mind, my brave Pegasus!" cried Bellerophon. "With another stroke like that we will surely stop either its hissing or its roaring."

And again he shook the bridle. Dashing aslantwise as before, the winged horse made another arrow-flight toward the Chimera, and

second head, had got into a red-hot passion of pain and rampant rage. It so flounced about, half on earth and partly in the air, that it was impossible to say which element it rested upon. It opened its snake jaws to such an abominable width that Pegasus might almost, I was going to say, have flown right down its throat, wings outspread, rider and all! At their approach it shot out a tremendous blast of its fiery breath and enveloped Bellerophon and his steed in a perfect atmosphere of flame, singeing the wings of Pegasus, scorching off one whole side of the young man's ringlets, and making them both far hotter than was comfortable from head to foot.

But this was nothing to what followed.

When the airy rush of the winged horse had brought him within the distance of a hundred yards, the Chimera gave a spring, and flung its huge, awkward, venomous and utterly detestable carcass right upon poor Pegasus, clung round him with might and main, and tied up its snaky tail into a knot! Up flew the aerial steed, higher, higher, above the mountain peaks, above the clouds, and almost out of sight of the solid earth. But still the earth-born monster kept its hold and was borne upward along with the creature of light and air. Bellerophon, meanwhile, turning about, found himself face to face with the ugly grimness of the Chimera's visage, and could only avoid being scorched to death or bitten right in twain by holding up his shield. Over the upper edge of the shield he looked sternly into the savage eyes of the monster.

THE DEATH OF THE CHIMERA

But the Chimera was so mad and wild with pain that it did not guard itself so well as might else have been the case. Perhaps, after all, the best way to fight a Chimera is by getting as close to it as you can. In its efforts to stick its horrible iron claws into its enemy the creature left its own breast quite exposed, and, perceiving this, Bellerophon thrust his sword up to the hilt into its cruel heart. Immediately the snaky tail untied its knot. The monster let go its hold of Pegasus and fell from that vast height downward, while the fire within its bosom, instead of being put out, burned fiercer than ever, and quickly began to consume the dead carcass. Thus it fell out of the sky all aflame, and (it being nightfall before it reached the earth) was mistaken for a shooting star or a comet. But at early sunrise some cottagers were going to their day's labor, and saw, to their astonishment, that several acres of ground were strewn with black ashes. In the middle of a field there was a heap of whitened bones a great deal higher than a haystack. Nothing else was ever seen of the dreadful Chimera!

And when Bellerophon had won the victory he bent forward and kissed Pegasus, while the tears stood in his eyes.

"Back now, my beloved steed!" said he. "Back to the fountain of Pirene!"

Pegasus skimmed through the air quicker than ever he did before, and reached the fountain in a very short time. And there he found the old man leaning on his staff, and the country fellow

watering his cow, and the pretty maiden filling her pitcher.

"I remember now," quoth the old man, "I saw this winged horse once before, when I was quite a lad. But he was ten times handsomer in those days."

"I own a cart horse worth three of him," said the country fellow. "If this pony were mine, the first thing I should do would be to clip his wings."

But the poor maiden said nothing, for she had always the luck to be afraid at the wrong time. So she ran away, and let her pitcher tumble down, and broke it.

"Where is the gentle child," asked Bellerophon, "who used to keep me company, and never lost his faith, and never was weary of gazing into the fountain?"

"Here am I, dear Bellerophon!" said the child softly.

For the little boy had spent day after day on the margin of Pirene, waiting for his friend to come back; but when he perceived Bellerophon descending through the clouds, mounted on the winged horse, he had shrunk back into the shrubbery. He was a delicate and tender child, and dreaded lest the old man and the country fellow should see the tears gushing from his eyes.

"Thou hast won the victory," said he joyfully, running to the knee of Bellerophon, who still sat on the back of Pegasus. "I knew thou wouldst."

"Yes, dear child!" replied Bellerophon, alighting from the winged horse. "But if thy faith had not helped me, I should never have waited for Pegasus, and never have gone up above the clouds, and never have conquered the terrible Chimera. Thou, my little friend, hast done it all. And now let us give Pegasus his liberty."

So he slipped off the enchanted bridle from the head of the marvelous steed.

"Be free for evermore, my Pegasus!" cried he, with a shade of sadness in his tone. "Be as free as thou art fleet."

But Pegasus rested his head on Bellerophon's shoulder, and would not take flight.

"Well, then," said Bellerophon, caressing the airy horse, "thou shalt be with me as long as thou wilt, and we will go together forthwith and tell King Iobates that the Chimera is destroyed."

Then Bellerophon embraced the gentle child and promised to come to him again, and departed. But in after years that child took higher flights upon the aerial steed than ever did Bellerophon, and achieved more honorable deeds than his friend's victory over the Chimera. For, gentle and tender as he was, he grew to be a mighty poet!

PICTURE-BOOKS IN WINTER

PICTURE-BOOKS IN WINTER

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

Summer fading, winter comes—
Frosty mornings, tingling thumbs,
Window robins, winter rooks,
And the picture story-books.

Water now is turned to stone
Nurse and I can walk upon;
Still we find the flowing brooks
In the picture story-books.

All the pretty things put by
Wait upon the children's eye—
Sheep and shepherds, trees and crooks,
In the picture story-books.

We may see how all things are—
Seas and cities, near and far,
And the flying fairies' looks—
In the picture story-books.

How am I to sing your praise,
Happy chimney-corner days,
Sitting safe in nursery nooks,
Reading picture story-books!

What we like about so fine a little poem as this is that it sets our thoughts to flying. As we read it, we see autumn coming on, with the red and the gold and the orange tinting the leaves. We can hear the last notes of the birds as they wing their way through the soft blue sky to gayer places in the warm southland. The cold comes fast, and in the morning, as we try to play ball or gather the ripe nuts from the hazel bushes, our thumbs tingle with the frost. The little Scotch boy sees his robin, a little bird with a reddish-yellow breast, come to his window, and hears the cawing of the rooks. We in the United States can hear the rough voice of the bluejay, or perhaps see the busy downy woodpecker tapping industriously at the suet we have hung in the tree for him.

A few days later the water in the pond becomes hard as stone, and we can walk over its smooth, glittering surface, or, if we are old enough, can make our way back and forth in widening circles to the music of our ringing skates. When the cold grows too severe and our cheeks burn in the wind, we can run inside, curl up in a big chair where it is warm and cheery, and, burying our faces in our favorite books, can see once more the little waves dancing on the pebbly shore of the pond, and hear the babble of the brook.

What can we find in the books? Everything that makes life merry, and everything that helps us to be true and manly. Out in the pasture the sheep are grazing, and among them walk the shepherds, singing gaily to the wide sky and the bright sun. When, perchance, a frisking lamb strays near the woods where perils lie, the shepherd follows, and with the crook at the end of his staff draws the wanderer back to safety.

These wonderful books of ours will carry us across the seas, even. We, for instance, might go to Scotland and play with the boy Stevenson. What a delight it would be; for the man who can write so charmingly about children must have been a wonderfully interesting boy to play with. And the cities we should see—quaint old Edinburgh, with its big, frowning castle on the top of that high rugged hill, and in the castle yard, old Mons Meg, the big cannon that every Scotch lad feels that he must crawl into. If that is too far away from us, we will come back to Boston, and walk through the Common, and hear again

the Yankee boys bravely complaining to General Gage because the British soldiers have trampled down the snow fort the youngsters have built.

But those are only real things; the more wonderful things are the flying fairies whose deeds we may read in this very book.

But how can we write in prose the praise of the picture story-books when Stevenson thinks he cannot do it in his pretty rhymes? Moreover, we have just found out that the poet's chimney corner is filled with the little ones who can read only the simplest things, and need big, fine pictures and easy words. He was not writing for us at all—but that does not matter. His little poem pleases us the same. Let us turn back and read it again—I suspect that, after all, we are all of us small enough to sit in a chimney corner; and perhaps every book is but a picture story-book to the man or woman who is old enough and big enough to read it rightly.

THE CHILD'S WORLD

W. B. RANDS

Great, wide, beautiful, wonderful World,
With the wonderful water round you curled,
And the wonderful grass upon your breast—
World, you are beautifully dressed.

The wonderful air is over me,
And the wonderful wind is shaking the tree;
It walks on the water, and whirls the mills,
And talks to itself on the tops of the hills.

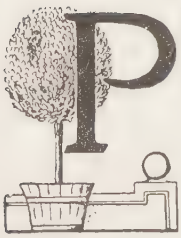
THE CHILD'S WORLD

You, friendly Earth! how far do you go
With the wheat-fields that nod and the rivers that flow,
With cities and gardens, and cliffs, and isles,
And people upon you for thousands of miles?

Ah, you are so great, and I am so small,
I tremble to think of you, World, at all;
And yet, when I said my prayers to-day,
A whisper inside me seemed to say:

"You are more than the Earth, though you are such a dot—
You can love and think, and the Earth cannot!"

THE STORY OF PHAETHON



PHAETHON, the son of the nymph Clymene, was very proud of his mother's beauty, and used to boast of it greatly to his playmates. Tired of the boy's bragging and conceit, one of his friends said to him one day:

"You're very willing to talk about your mother, but I notice you never speak of your father. Are you ashamed of him?"

"No, I'm not," replied Phaethon, trying to look unabashed.

"Well, then, tell us about him. If he were anything great, you would be willing enough to brag about him."

And because Phaethon kept quiet, all of his playmates began to jeer at him, cruelly enough.

"You don't know your father. You've never seen him," they cried.

Phaethon would not cry before them, but there were tears of shame and anger in his eyes as he told the story to his mother.

"Never mind, my boy," she said soothingly. "To-morrow you shall tell them the name of your father, and that will stop their taunts. Come, let me whisper it to you."

When Phaethon heard what she had to tell him, his eyes shone with joy and pride, and he could scarce wait for morning to carry his news

to his mocking friends. He was first at the meeting-place, but he would say nothing until all his playmates were gathered. Then he said, quietly, but O, so proudly:

"My father is Apollo, the sun-god!"

For a moment there was silence; then came a burst of laughter from the group crowded about Phaethon.

"A likely story! Who ever heard anything so ridiculous? It's quite plain that your mother is ashamed of your father, and is trying to throw you off the track."

Again Phaethon ran home, his cheeks burning, his eyes flashing, and again he told his mother all that had passed.

"It's too late to do anything about it to-day," said Clymene, "but to-morrow you shall go yourself to your father's palace, before he sets out on his trip across the sky; and if he is pleased with you, he will give you some proof that you are really his son."

Long before daylight the next morning Phaethon set out, and with his mother's directions in mind, walked straight east until he came to the dazzling palace of the sun. Had he not been a bold youth, he would have been frightened and turned back; but he was determined to prove his boasts, and passed on into the palace. At last, on a great golden throne, he saw his father—surely a more glorious father than ever boy had before. So glorious was he that Phaethon dared not approach him closely, as the light about the throne was blinding.

When Apollo recognized him, however, he took off the crown of rays from about his head and called to Phaethon to approach fearlessly.

As the boy stood before the throne, he was a son of whom no father, even Apollo, needed to be ashamed; and as he hurried into his story, the sun-god smiled at the signs of his impetuous temper.

"You're willing to own me for your son, aren't you?" finished Phaethon.

"To be sure I am," replied the sun-god; "and that your mates may never have chance to doubt it more, I swear by the terrible Styx[1] to give you any proof you ask."

It did not take Phaethon long to decide—he had made up his mind on the way; and his words fairly tumbled over each other as he cried eagerly:

"Then I'll drive the sun-chariot for a day!"

Apollo was horrified, for he knew that he alone of the gods could manage the fiery steeds; and if great Jupiter himself could not do it, what would happen if they were placed in the power of this slight boy? He begged Phaethon to release him from his promise, but—

"You promised, you promised!" repeated the boy. "You swore by the Styx, and you *can't* break your word."

1. The Styx was one of the great rivers of Hades. The oath by the Styx was regarded as so binding that even a god could not break it without being punished severely for his perjury. Any god who broke his oath was obliged to drink of the black waters of the Styx, which kept him in utter unconsciousness for a year; and after his return to consciousness he was banished for nine years from Olympus.

This was true, as Apollo knew well; and at length, with a sigh, he turned and called to his servants, the Hours, who stood ready to attend him on his journey:

"Harness my steeds, and make sure that everything is right about the chariot."

While this was being done, Apollo explained carefully to his son the dangers of the way, hoping yet to turn him from his purpose.

"The path runs steeply upward at first," he said, "and with all their strength the horses can scarce drag the chariot. During the middle of the day the course is high, high in the heavens, and it will sicken you and make you dizzy if you look down. But the latter part of the drive is most dangerous, for it slopes rapidly down, and if the horses are not tightly reined in, horses, chariot and driver will fall headlong into the sea."

Nothing frightened Phaethon.

"You see," he explained, "it's not as if I didn't know how to drive. I've often driven my grandfather's horses, and they are wild and strong."

By this time the magnificent golden chariot and the six horses of white fire were ready, and after one last plea to his son, Apollo permitted him to mount the seat. He anointed the boy's face with a cooling lotion, that the heat might not scorch him, and placed the crown of beams about his head.

"And now," he said, "you must be off. Already the people on earth are wondering why

the sun does not rise. Do remember, my boy, not to use the whip, and to choose a path across the heavens which is neither too high nor too low."

With but scant attention to his father's advice, Phaethon gave the word to his steeds and dashed out of the gates which Aurora opened for him. And thus began a day which the gods on Olympus and the people on earth never forgot.

The horses easily perceived that some other hand than their master's held the lines, and they promptly became unmanageable. In vain Phaethon pulled at the reins; in vain he called the steeds by name. Up the sky they dashed, and then, first to the south, then to the north, they took their zigzag course across the heavens. What a sight it must have presented from below, this sun reeling crazily about the sky! Worst of all, however, the horses did not keep at the same distance from the earth. First they went down, down, until they almost touched the mountain tops. Trees, grass, wheat, flowers, all were scorched and blackened; and one great tract in Africa was so parched that nothing has since been able to grow upon it.[2] Rivers were dried up, the snow on the mountain tops was melted, and, strangest of all, the people in the country over which the sun-chariot was passing were burned black.[2] Then, rising, the horses dragged the chariot so far from the earth that

2. In this way the ancients explained the great desert of Sahara, and the dark color of the people of Africa.

PHAETHON PULLED AT THE REINS

intense, bitter cold killed off much of the vegetation which the fierce heat had spared.

Poor Phaethon could do nothing but clutch the seat and shut his eyes. He dared not look down, lest he lose his balance and fall; he dared not look about him, for there were, in all parts of the heavens, the most terrifying animals—

a great scorpion, a lion, two bears, a huge crab.[3] Vainly he repented of his rashness; sadly he wondered in what way his death would come.

It came suddenly—so suddenly that poor Phaethon did not feel the pain of it. For Jupiter, when he saw the sun rocking about the heavens, did not stop to inquire who the unknown charioteer was; he knew it was not Apollo, and he knew the earth was being ruined—that was enough. Seizing one of his biggest thunderbolts, he hurled it with all his might, and Phaethon fell, flaming, from his lofty seat into the Eridanus River; while the horses, whom no thunderbolt could harm, trotted quietly back to their stalls. Clymene bewailed her son's death bitterly, and his companions, grieved that their taunts should have driven their comrade to his destruction, helped her to erect over his grave a stone on which were these words:

"Lies buried here young Phaethon, who sought
To guide his father's chariot of flame.
What though he failed? No death ignoble his
Who fared to meet it with such lofty aim."

Most of the Greek myths had meanings; they were not simply fairy stories. And while we have no means now of finding the meanings of some of them, many of them are so clear that we can understand exactly what the Greeks

3. These terrifying animals which Phaethon saw in the sky were the groups of stars, the constellations to which the ancients gave the names of animals, etc. We know the Big Dipper, or Great Bear, for we may see it in the north any clear night.

meant to teach by them. By far the most numerous are the so-called "nature myths"—myths which they invented to explain the happenings which they saw constantly about them in the natural world. Of these nature myths the story of Phaethon is one.

The ancients believed that drought was caused by the sun's coming too close to the earth; but how could Apollo, experienced driver of the sun-chariot, ever be so careless as to drive close enough to the earth to burn it? It was easy enough to imagine that the chariot, when it did such damage, was being driven by some reckless person who knew not how to guide it. But then arose the necessity of explaining Apollo's willingness to trust such a reckless person with so great a task; and what more likely than that the inexperienced charioteer was Apollo's beloved son, who had induced his father to grant his rash request? Gradually details were added, until the story took the form in which we have it.

As the drought of summer is often brought to a close by a storm which is accompanied by thunder and lightning, and which hides the light of the sun, so in the story Phaethon's ruinous drive is brought to an end by the thunderbolt of Jupiter; while the horses, trotting back home before their time, leave the world in comparative darkness.

It must not be supposed that some one just sat down one day and said, "I will tell a story which shall explain drought and the ending of drought." This story, like all the others, grew

up gradually. Perhaps, one day, in time of drought, some one said to his neighbor, "The chariot of Apollo is coming too close to the earth," and perhaps his neighbor replied, "Some one who knows not how to guide the white horses is driving it." Such language might in time easily become the common language for describing times of drought; and so, at length, would grow up, out of what was at first merely a description, in figurative language, of a natural happening, a story, in dramatic form.

THE ENGLISH ROBIN

HARRISON WEIR

See yon robin on the spray;
  Look ye how his tiny form
Swells, as when his merry lay
  Gushes forth amid the storm.

Though the snow is falling fast,
  Specking o'er his coat with white,
Though loud roars the chilly blast,
  And the evening's lost in night,

Yet from out the darkness dreary
  Cometh still that cheerful note;
Praiseful aye, and never weary,
  Is that little warbling throat.

Thank him for his lesson's sake,
  Thank God's gentle minstrel there,
Who, when storms make others quake,
  Sings of days that brighter were.

The English robin is not the bird we call robin redbreast in the United States. Our robin is a big, lordly chap about ten inches long, but the English robin is not more than five and a half inches long; that is, it is smaller than an English sparrow. The robin of the poem has an olive-green back and a breast of yellowish red, and in habits it is like our warblers. It is a sweet singer, and a confiding, friendly little thing, so that English children are very fond of it, and English writers are continually referring to it.

SEVEN TIMES ONE

JEAN INGELOW

There's no dew left on the daisies and clover,
There's no rain left in heaven;
I've said my "seven times" over and over—
Seven times one are seven.

I am so old, so old I can write a letter;
My birthday lessons are done;
The lambs play always, they know no better;
They are only one times one.

O moon! in the night I have seen you sailing
And shining so round and low;
You were bright! ah, bright! but your light is failing—
You are nothing now but a bow.

You moon, have you done something wrong in heaven,
That God has hidden your face?

I hope if you have you will soon be forgiven,
And shine again in your place.

O velvet bee, you're a dusty fellow,
You've powdered your legs with gold!
O brave marsh marybuds, rich and yellow,
Give me your money to hold!

O columbine, open your folded wrapper,
Where two twin turtledoves dwell!
O cuckoopint, toll me the purple clapper
That hangs in your clear green bell!

And show me your nest with the young ones in it;
I will not steal them away;
I am old! you may trust me, linnet, linnet—
I am seven times one to-day.

THE POPPYLAND EXPRESS

ST. LOUIS STAR SAYINGS

The first train leaves at 6 p. m.
For the land where the poppy blows.
The mother is the engineer,
And the passenger laughs and crows.

The palace car is the mother's arms;
The whistle a low, sweet strain.
The passenger winks and nods and blinks
And goes to sleep on the train.

At 8. p. m. the next train starts
For the poppyland afar.
The summons clear falls on the ear,
"All aboard for the sleeping car!"

But "What is the fare to poppyland?
I hope it is not too dear."
The fare is this—a hug and a kiss,
And it's paid to the engineer.

So I ask of Him who children took
On His knee in kindness great:
"Take charge, I pray, of the trains each day
That leave at six and eight.

"Keep watch of the passengers," thus I pray,
"For to me they are very dear;
And special ward, O gracious Lord
O'er the gentle engineer."

TOM, THE WATER BABY

CHARLES KINGSLEY

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

Charles Kingsley, who was born in 1819, and became Canon of the Church of England at Chester, wrote, in addition to his interesting and brilliant novels, *The Water Babies*, which is a charming fairy story for young people. It is, however, one of those stories that can be read more than once, and read by all classes of people.

Besides telling the delightful story of Tom, the water baby, and his wonderful adventures on land and in water, Canon Kingsley gives in a very amusing style accounts of many of the animals that live in and near the water. But he brings them all into the story in such a way that they seem to be real, living characters, and you are almost as much interested in the stately salmon and his wife, or even in the funny old lobster, as you would be if they were actual human beings.

As the story was written originally, there was a great deal in it for children of much larger growth than those who will read it here. In some respects the story resembles *Gulliver's Travels*, for Kingsley took occasion to be satirical about many of the things which men and women say, do and believe. Some of this satire children will enjoy thoroughly, but some of it

could not be understood well except by persons who have lived in this world for many years. Accordingly, in this book, we have thought it best to leave out some things, giving you only the story of Tom, and hoping that when you young readers grow to manhood or womanhood you will find *The Water Babies*, complete, a good story to read. You will enjoy recalling the delight you have in it now, and will find out that even a children's story may be so told as to keep a man thinking.

Moreover, the story was written by an Englishman for an English boy, and there are a great many allusions to things that only English boys appreciate or understand, and it has seemed wise to omit most of these. On the other hand, nothing has been omitted to weaken the story of Tom, and nothing has been added to destroy the charm of Canon Kingsley's writing.

CHAPTER I

NCE upon a time there was a little chimney-sweep,[1] and his name was Tom. That is a short name, and you have heard it before, so you will not have much trouble in remembering it. He lived in a great town in the North country, where there were plenty of chimneys to sweep, and plenty of money for Tom to earn and his master

1. A boy would have a hard time crawling through some of our chimneys nowadays; but years ago, when houses had open fireplaces instead of steam plants, there was a network of huge chimneys through which a small boy could easily work his way, brushing off the soot as he went.

to spend. He could not read nor write, and did not care to do either; and he never washed himself, for there was no water up the court where he lived. He had never been taught to say his prayers. He never had heard of God, or of Christ, except in words which you never have heard, and which it would have been well if he had never heard. He cried half his time, and laughed the other half. He cried when he had to climb the dark flues, rubbing his poor knees and elbows raw; and when the soot got into his eyes, which it did every day in the week; and when his master beat him, which he did every day in the week; and when he had not enough to eat, which happened every day in the week likewise. And he laughed the other half of the day, when he was tossing halfpennies with the other boys, or playing leapfrog over the posts, or bowling stones at the horses' legs as they trotted by, which last was excellent fun, when there was a wall at hand behind which to hide. As for chimney-sweeping, and being hungry, and being beaten, he took all that for the way of the world, like the rain and snow and thunder, and stood manfully with his back to it till it was over, as his old donkey did to a hailstorm; and then shook his ears and was as jolly as ever; and thought of the fine times coming, when he would be a man, and a master sweep,[2] and sit in the public-house with a quart of beer and a long pipe, and play cards for silver money, and wear

2. A master sweep was a man who had grown too large to climb up chimneys, but who kept boys whom he hired out for that purpose.

velveteens and ankle-jacks, and keep a white bulldog with one gray ear, and carry her puppies in his pocket, just like a man. And he would have apprentices, one, two, three, if he could. How he would bully them, and knock them about, just as his master did to him; and make them carry home the soot sacks, while he rode before them on his donkey, with a pipe in his mouth and a flower in his buttonhole, like a king at the head of his army. Yes, there were good times coming; and when his master let him have a pull at the leavings of his beer, Tom was the jolliest boy in the whole town.

One day a smart little groom rode into the court where Tom lived, and halloed to him to know where Mr. Grimes, the chimney-sweep, lived. Now, Mr. Grimes was Tom's own master, and Tom was a good man of business, and always civil to customers, so he proceeded to take orders.

Mr. Grimes was to come up next morning to Sir John Harthover's at the Place, for his old chimney-sweep was gone to prison, and the chimneys wanted sweeping. And so he rode away, not giving Tom time to ask what the sweep had gone to prison for, which was a matter of interest to Tom, as he had been in prison once or twice himself. Moreover, the groom looked so very neat and clean, with his drab gaiters, drab breeches, drab jacket, snow-white tie with a smart pin in it, and clean round ruddy face, that Tom was offended and disgusted at his appearance, and considered him a

stuck-up fellow, who gave himself airs because he wore smart clothes, and other people paid for them.

His master was so delighted at his new customer that he knocked Tom down out of hand, and drank more beer that night than he usually did in two, in order to be sure of getting up in time next morning; for the more a man's head aches when he wakes, the more glad he is to turn out, and have a breath of fresh air. And when he did get up at four the next morning, he knocked Tom down again, in order to teach him (as young gentlemen used to be taught at public schools) that he must be an extra good boy that day, as they were going to a very great house, and might make a very good thing of it, if they could but give satisfaction.

And Tom thought so likewise, and, indeed, would have done and behaved his best, even without being knocked down. For, of all places upon earth, Harthover Place (which he had never seen) was the most wonderful, and, of all men on earth, Sir John (whom he had seen, having been sent to jail by him twice) was the most awful.

Harthover Place was really a grand place, even for the rich North country, and Sir John a grand old man, whom even Mr. Grimes respected; for not only could he send Mr. Grimes to prison when he deserved it, as he did once or twice a week; not only did he own all the land about for miles; not only was he as jolly, honest, sensible squire as ever kept a pack of hounds,

who would do what he thought right by his neighbors, as well as get what he thought right for himself; but what was more, he weighed full fifteen stone, was nobody knew how many inches round the chest, and could have thrashed Mr. Grimes himself in fair fight, which very few folk round there could do, and which, my dear little boy, would not have been right for him to do, as a great many things are not which one can do, and would like very much to do. So Mr. Grimes touched his hat to him when he rode through the town, and thought that that made up for his poaching Sir John's pheasants.

So Tom and his master set out; Grimes rode the donkey in front, and Tom and the brushes walked behind; out of the court, and up the street, past the closed window shutters, and the winking weary policemen, and the roofs all shining gray in the gray dawn.

They passed through the pitmen's village, all shut up and silent now, and through the turnpike; and then they were out in the real country, and plodding along the black dusty road, between black slag walls, with no sound but the groaning and thumping of the pit-engine in the next field. But soon the road grew white, and the walls likewise; and at the wall's foot grew long grass and gay flowers, all drenched with dew; and instead of the groaning of the pit-engine, they heard the skylark saying his matins high up in the air, and the pit-bird warbling in the sedges, as he had warbled all night long.

All else was silent. For old Mrs. Earth was

still fast asleep; and, like many pretty people, she looked still prettier asleep than awake. The great elm trees in the gold-green meadows were fast asleep above, and the cows fast asleep beneath them; nay, the few clouds which were about were fast asleep likewise, and so tired that they had lain down on the earth to rest, in long white flakes and bars, among the stems of the elm trees, and along the tops of the alders by the stream, waiting for the sun to bid them rise and go about their day's business in the clear blue overhead.

On they went; and Tom looked, and looked, for he never had been so far into the country before; and longed to get over a gate, and pick buttercups, and look for birds' nests in the hedge; but Mr. Grimes was a man of business, and would not have heard of that.

Soon they came up with a poor Irishwoman, trudging along with a bundle at her back. She had a gray shawl over her head, and a crimson madder petticoat; so you may be sure she came from Galway.[3] She had neither shoes nor stockings, and limped along as if she were tired and footsore; but she was a very tall, handsome woman, with bright gray eyes, and heavy black hair hanging about her cheeks. And she took Mr. Grimes' fancy so much, that when he came alongside he called out to her:

"This is a hard road for a gradely[4] foot like

3. Galway is a county in the western part of Ireland. The dress here described was the characteristic dress of the peasants of that county.

4. *Gradely*, or *graithly*, is an old word which meant *decent* or *comely*.

THE IRISHWOMAN

that. Will ye up, lass, and ride behind me?"

But, perhaps she did not admire Mr. Grimes' look and voice; for she answered quietly:

"No, thank you; I'd sooner walk with your little lad here."

"You may please yourself," growled Grimes, and went on smoking.

So she walked beside Tom, and talked to him, and asked him where he lived, and what he knew, and all about himself, till Tom thought he had never met such a pleasant-spoken woman. And she asked him, at last, whether he said his prayers! and seemed sad when he told her that he knew no prayers to say.

Then he asked her where she lived, and she said far away by the sea. And Tom asked her about the sea; and she told him how it rolled and roared over the rocks in winter nights, and lay still in the bright summer days, for the children to bathe and play in it: and many a story more, till Tom longed to go and see the sea, and bathe in it likewise.

At last, at the bottom of a hill, they came to a spring; a real North country fountain, like one of those in Sicily or Greece, where the old heathen fancied the nymphs[5] sat cooling themselves the hot summer's day, while the shepherds peeped at them from behind the bushes. Out of a low cave of rock, at the foot of a limestone crag, the great fountain rose, quelling, and bubbling, and gurgling, so clear that you could not tell where the water ended and the air began: and ran away under the road, a stream large enough to turn a mill; among blue geranium, and golden globeflower, and wild raspberry,

5. The nymphs, according to the ancient Greeks, were divinities in the shape of beautiful maidens, who lived in the woods or in springs and streams.

and the bird cherry with its tassels of snow.[6]

And there Grimes stopped and looked; and Tom looked too. Tom was wondering whether anything lived in that dark cave, and came out at night to fly in the meadows. But Grimes was not wondering at all. Without a word, he got off his donkey, and clambered over the low road wall, and knelt down, and began dipping his ugly head into the spring—and very dirty he made it.

Tom was picking the flowers as fast as he could. The Irishwoman helped him, and showed him how to tie them up; and a very pretty nosegay they had made between them. But when he saw Grimes actually wash, he stopped, quite astonished; and when Grimes had finished, and began shaking his ears to dry them, he said:

"Why, master, I never saw you do that before."

"Nor will again, most likely. 'Twasn't for cleanliness I did it, but for coolness. I'd be ashamed to want washing every week or so, like any smutty collier lad."

"I wish I might go and dip my head in," said poor little Tom. "It must be as good as putting it under the town pump; and there is no beadle here to drive a chap away."

"Thou come along," said Grimes; "what dost want with washing thyself? Thou did not drink half a gallon of beer last night, like me."

6. These are English flowers, but you probably know some of them. The wild geranium, for instance, with its pinkish-purple flowers, is common in our woods. The globeflower is of rather a pale yellow, and its petals curl in so that it looks like a ball.

"I don't care for you," said naughty Tom, and ran down to the stream, and began washing his face.

Grimes was very sulky, because the woman preferred Tom's company to his; so he dashed at him with horrid words, and tore him up from his knees, and began beating him. But Tom was accustomed to that, and got his head safe between Mr. Grimes' legs, and kicked his shins with all his might.

"Are you not ashamed of yourself, Thomas Grimes?" cried the Irishwoman over the wall.

Grimes looked up, startled at her knowing his name; but all he answered was, "No, nor never was yet"; and went on beating Tom.

"True for you. If you had ever been ashamed of yourself, you would have gone over into Vendale long ago."

"What do you know about Vendale?" shouted Grimes; but he left off beating Tom.

"I know about Vendale, and about you, too. I know, for instance, what happened in Aldermire Copse, by night, two years ago come Martinmas."

"You do?" shouted Grimes; and leaving Tom, he climbed up over the wall, and faced the woman. Tom thought he was going to strike her; but she looked him too full and fierce in the face for that.

"Yes; I was there," said the Irishwoman quietly.

"You are no Irishwoman, by your speech," said Grimes, after many bad words.

"Never mind who I am. I saw what I saw; and if you strike that boy again, I can tell what I know."

Grimes seemed quite cowed, and got on his donkey without another word.

"Stop!" said the Irishwoman. "I have one more word for you both; for you will both see me again before all is over. *Those that wish to be clean, clean they will be; and those that wish to be foul, foul they will be. Remember.*"

And she turned away, and through a gate into the meadow. Grimes stood still a moment, like a man who had been stunned. Then he rushed after her, shouting, "You come back." But when he got into the meadow, the woman was not there.

Had she hidden away? There was no place to hide in. But Grimes looked about, and Tom also, for he was as puzzled as Grimes himself at her disappearing so suddenly; but look where they would, she was not there.

Grimes came back again, as silent as a post, for he was a little frightened; and, getting on his donkey, filled a fresh pipe, and smoked away, leaving Tom in peace.

And now they had gone three miles and more, and came to Sir John's lodge gates.

Grimes rang at the gate, and out came a keeper[7] on the spot, and opened.

"I was told to expect thee," he said. "Now

7. A keeper is a man appointed, on a large estate, to see that no one trespasses on the grounds or poaches the game.

thou'lt be so good as to keep to the main avenue, and not let me find a hare or a rabbit on thee when thou comest back. I shall look sharp for one, I tell thee."

"Not if it's in the bottom of the soot bag," quoth Grimes, and at that he laughed; and the keeper laughed and said:

"If that's thy sort, I may as well walk up with thee to the hall."

"I think thou best had. It's thy business to see after thy game, man, and not mine."

So the keeper went with them; and, to Tom's surprise, he and Grimes chatted together all the way quite pleasantly. He did not know that a keeper is only a poacher turned outside in, and a poacher a keeper turned inside out.

They walked up a great lime avenue, a full mile long, and between their stems Tom peeped trembling at the horns of the sleeping deer, which stood up among the ferns. Tom had never seen such enormous trees, and as he looked up he fancied that the blue sky rested on their heads. But he was puzzled very much by a strange murmuring noise, which followed them all the way. So much puzzled, that at last he took courage to ask the keeper what it was.

He spoke very civilly, and called him Sir, for he was horribly afraid of him, which pleased the keeper, and he told him that they were the bees about the lime flowers.

"What are bees?" asked Tom.

"What make honey."

"What is honey?" asked Tom.

"Thou hold thy noise," said Grimes.

"Let the boy be," said the keeper. "He's a civil young chap now, and that's more than he'll be long if he bides with thee."

Grimes laughed, for he took that for a compliment.

"I wish I were a keeper," said Tom, "to live in such a beautiful place, and wear green velveteens, and have a real dog-whistle at my button, like you."

The keeper laughed; he was a kind-hearted fellow enough.

"Let well alone, lad, and ill too at times. Thy life's safer than mine at all events, eh, Mr. Grimes?"

And Grimes laughed again, and then the two men began talking quite low. Tom could hear, though, that it was about some poaching fight; and at last Grimes said surlily, "Hast thou anything against me?"

"Not now."

"Then don't ask me any questions till thou hast, for I am a man of honour."

And at that they both laughed again, and thought it a very good joke.

And by this time they were come up to the great iron gates in front of the house; and Tom stared through them at the rhododendrons and azaleas, which were all in flower; and then at the house itself, and wondered how many chimneys there were in it, and how long ago it was built, and what was the man's name that built it, and whether he got much money for his job.

HARTHOVER PLACE

But Tom and his master did not go in through the great iron gates, as if they had been dukes or bishops, but round the back way, and a very long way round it was; and into a little back door, where the ash-boy let them in, yawning

horribly; and then in a passage the housekeeper met them, in such a flowered chintz dressing gown, that Tom mistook her for My Lady herself, and she gave Grimes solemn orders about "You will take care of this, and take care of that," as if he was going up the chimneys, and not Tom. And Grimes listened, and said every now and then, under his voice, "You'll mind that, you little beggar?" and Tom did mind, all at least that he could. And then the housekeeper turned them into a grand room, all covered up in sheets of brown paper, and bade them begin, in a lofty and tremendous voice; and so after a whimper or two, and a kick from his master, into the grate Tom went, and up the chimney, while a housemaid stayed in the room to watch the furniture.

How many chimneys Tom swept I cannot say; but he swept so many that he got quite tired, and puzzled too, for they were not like the town flues to which he was accustomed, but such as you would find—if you would only get up them and look, which perhaps you would not like to do—in old country houses; large and crooked chimneys, which had been altered again and again, till they ran one into another. So Tom fairly lost his way in them; not that he cared much for that, though he was in pitch darkness, for he was as much at home in a chimney as a mole is underground; but at last, coming down as he thought the right chimney, he came down the wrong one, and found himself standing on the hearthrug in a room the like of which he had never seen before.

He had never been in gentlefolks' rooms but when the carpets were all up, and the curtains down, and the furniture huddled together under a cloth, and the pictures covered with aprons and dusters; and he had often enough wondered what the rooms were like when they were all ready for the quality to sit in. And now he saw, and he thought the sight very pretty.

The room was all dressed in white,—white window curtains, white bed curtains, white furniture and white walls, with just a few lines of pink here and there. The carpet was all over gay little flowers; and the walls were hung with pictures in gilt frames, which amused Tom very much. There were pictures of ladies and gentlemen, and pictures of horses and dogs. The horses he liked; but the dogs he did not care for much, for there were no bulldogs among them, not even a terrier. But the two pictures which took his fancy most were, one a man in long garments, with little children and their mothers round him, who was laying his hand upon the children's heads. That was a very pretty picture, Tom thought, to hang in a lady's room. For he could see that it was a lady's room by the dresses which lay about.

The other picture was that of a man nailed to a cross, which surprised Tom much. He fancied that he had seen something like it in a shop window. But why was it there? "Poor man," thought Tom, "and he looks so kind and quiet." But why should the lady have such a sad picture as that in her room? Perhaps it was some kins-

man of hers, who had been murdered by the savages in foreign parts, and she kept it there for a remembrance. And Tom felt sad, and awed, and turned to look at something else.

The next thing he saw, and that too puzzled him, was a washing-stand, with ewers and basins, and soap and brushes, and towels, and a large bath full of clean water—what a heap of things all for washing! "She must be a very dirty lady," thought Tom, "by my master's rule, to want as much scrubbing as all that. But she must be very cunning to put the dirt out of the way so well afterwards, for I don't see a speck about the room, not even on the very towels."

And then, looking toward the bed, he saw that dirty lady, and held his breath with astonishment.

Under the snow-white coverlet, upon the snow-white pillow, lay the most beautiful little girl that Tom had ever seen. Her cheeks were almost as white as the pillow, and her hair was like threads of gold spread all about over the bed. She might have been as old as Tom, or maybe a year or two older; but Tom did not think of that. He thought only of her delicate skin and golden hair, and wondered whether she was a real live person, or one of the wax dolls he had seen in the shops. But when he saw her breathe, he made up his mind that she was alive, and stood staring at her, as if she had been an angel out of heaven.

No. She cannot be dirty. She never could

have been dirty, thought Tom to himself; and then he thought, "And are all people like that when they are washed?" And he looked at his own wrist, and tried to rub the soot off, and wondered whether it ever would come off. "Certainly I should look much prettier then, if I grew at all like her."

And looking round, he suddenly saw, standing close to him, a little ugly, black, ragged figure, with bleared eyes and grinning white teeth. He turned on it angrily. What did such a little black ape want in that sweet young lady's room? And behold, it was himself, reflected in a great mirror, the like of which Tom had never seen before.

And Tom, for the first time in his life, found out that he was dirty; and burst into tears with shame and anger; and turned to sneak up the chimney again and hide; and upset the fender and threw the fire irons down, with a noise as of ten thousand tin kettles tied to ten thousand mad dogs' tails.

Up jumped the little white lady in her bed, and seeing Tom, screamed as shrill as any peacock. In rushed a stout old nurse from the next room, and seeing Tom likewise, made up her mind that he had come to rob, plunder, destroy, and burn, and dashed at him, as he lay over the fender, so fast that she caught him by the jacket.

But she did not hold him. Tom had been in a policeman's hands many a time, and out of them too, what is more; and he would have been

TOM ESCAPES

ashamed to face his friends forever if he had been stupid enough to be caught by an old woman; so he doubled under the good lady's arm, across the room, and out of the window in a moment.

He did not need to drop out, though he would

have done so bravely enough; for all under the window spread a tree, with great leaves and sweet white flowers, almost as big as his head. It was magnolia, I suppose; but Tom knew nothing about that, and cared less; for down the tree he went, like a cat, and across the garden lawn, and over the iron railings, and up the park towards the wood, leaving the old nurse to scream murder and fire at the window.

The under gardener, mowing, saw Tom, and threw down his scythe; caught his leg in it, and cut his shin open, whereby he kept his bed for a week; but in his hurry he never knew it, and gave chase to poor Tom. The dairymaid heard the noise, got the churn between her knees, and tumbled over it, spilling all the cream; and yet she jumped up, and gave chase to Tom. A groom cleaning Sir John's hack at the stables let him go loose, whereby he kicked himself lame in five minutes; but he ran out and gave chase to Tom. Grimes upset the soot sack in the new-gravelled yard, and spoilt it all utterly; but he ran out and gave chase to Tom. The old steward opened the park gate in such a hurry, that he hung up his pony's chin upon the spikes, and, for aught I know, it hangs there still; but he jumped off, and gave chase to Tom. The ploughman left his horses at the headland, and one jumped over the fence, and pulled the other into the ditch, plough and all; but he ran on, and gave chase to Tom. Sir John looked out of his study window (for he was an early old gentleman) and up at the nurse, and a martin

dropped mud in his eye, so that he had at last to send for the doctor; and yet he ran out, and gave chase to Tom. The Irishwoman, too, was walking up to the house to beg,—she must have got round by some byway,—but she threw away her bundle, and gave chase to Tom likewise. Only my lady did not give chase; for when she had put her head out of the window, her night-wig fell into the garden, and she had to ring up her lady's maid, and send her down for it privately, which quite put her out of the running, so that she came nowhere, and is consequently not placed.

In a word, never was there heard at Hall Place—not even when the fox was killed in the conservatory, among acres of broken glass, and tons of smashed flowerpots—such a noise, row, hubbub, babel, shindy, hullabaloo, and total contempt of dignity, repose, and order, as that day, when Grimes, the gardener, the groom, the dairymaid, Sir John, the steward, the ploughman, and the Irishwoman, all ran up the park, shouting "Stop thief," in the belief that Tom had at least a thousand pounds' worth of jewels in his empty pockets; and the very magpies and jays followed Tom up, screaking and screaming, as though he were a hunted fox, beginning to droop his brush.

And all the while poor Tom paddled up the park with his little bare feet, like a small black gorilla fleeing to the forest. Alas for him! there was no big father gorilla therein to take his part—to scratch out the gardener's inside with one

paw, toss the dairymaid into a tree with another, and wrench off Sir John's head with a third, while he cracked the groom's skull with his teeth as easily as if it had been a cocoanut or a paving stone.

Tom, of course, made for the woods. He had never been in a wood in his life; but he was sharp enough to know that he might hide in a bush, or swarm up a tree, and, altogether, had more chance there than in the open.

But when he got into the wood, he found it a very different sort of place from what he had fancied. He pushed into a thick cover of rhododendrons, and found himself at once caught in a trap. The boughs laid hold of his legs and arms, poked him in his face and his stomach, made him shut his eyes tight (though that was no great loss, for he could not see at best a yard before his nose); and when he got through the rhododendrons, the hassock-grass and sedges tumbled him over, and cut his poor little fingers afterwards most spitefully; the birches birched him as soundly as if he had been a nobleman at Eton,[8] and over the face too (which is not fair swishing, as all brave boys will agree).

"I must get out of this," thought Tom, "or I shall stay here till somebody comes to help me—which is just what I don't want."

But how to get out was the difficult matter. And indeed I don't think he would ever have got

8. Eton is one of the most famous of English public schools. The young British nobles here meet and associate with the young commoners in the most democratic manner.

out at all, but have stayed there till the cock-robins covered him with leaves, if he had not suddenly run his head against a wall.

Now running your head against a wall is not pleasant, especially if it is a loose wall, with the stones all set on edge, and a sharp-cornered one hits you between the eyes and makes you see all manner of beautiful stars. The stars are very beautiful, certainly; but unfortunately they go in the twenty-thousandth part of a split second, and the pain which comes after them does not. And so Tom hurt his head; but he was a brave boy, and did not mind that a penny. He guessed that over the wall the cover would end; and up it he went, and over like a squirrel.

And there he was, out on the great grouse moors, which the country folk called Harthover Fell[9]—heather and bog and rock, stretching away and up, up to the very sky.

Now, Tom was a cunning little fellow—as cunning as an old Exmoor[10] stag. Why not? Though he was but ten years old, he had lived longer than most stags, and had more wits to start with into the bargain.

He knew as well as a stag that if he backed he might throw the hounds out. So the first thing he did when he was over the wall was to make the neatest double, sharp to his right, and run along under the wall for nearly half a mile.

9. *Fell* is the name given, in parts of England, to moors, or stretches of high, open country of any sort.

10. Exmoor is a region in Somersetshire and Devonshire, in England. It was formerly a forest, but is now a moor, and is a favorite resort of the deer.

Meanwhile the gardener and the groom, the dairymaid and the plowman, and all the hue and cry together, went on ahead half a mile in the very opposite direction, and inside the wall, leaving him a mile off on the outside; while Tom heard their shouts die away in the woods and chuckled to himself merrily.

At last he came to a dip in the land, and went to the bottom of it, and then he turned bravely away from the wall and up the moor; for he knew that he had put a hill between him and his enemies, and could go on without their seeing him.

But the Irishwoman, alone of them all, had seen which way Tom went. She had kept ahead of every one the whole time; and yet she neither walked nor ran. She went along quite smoothly and gracefully, while her feet twinkled past each other so fast that you could not see which was foremost; till every one asked the other who the strange woman was; and all agreed, for want of anything better to say, that she must be in league with Tom.

But when she came to the plantation, they lost sight of her; and they could do no less. For she went quietly over the wall after Tom, and followed him wherever he went. Sir John and the rest saw no more of her; and out of sight was out of mind.

And now Tom was right away into the heather, over a moor growing more and more broken and hilly, but not so rough but that little Tom could jog along well enough, and find time, too, to

stare about at the strange place, which was like a new world to him.

So Tom went on and on, he hardly knew why; but he liked the great, wide, strange place, and the cool, fresh, bracing air. But he went more and more slowly as he got higher up the hill; for now the ground grew very bad indeed. Instead of soft turf and springy heather, he met great patches of flat limestone rock, just like ill-made pavements, with deep cracks between the stones and ledges, filled with ferns; so he had to hop from stone to stone, and now and then he slipped in between, and hurt his little bare toes, though they were tolerably tough ones; but still he would go on and up, he could not tell why.

What would Tom have said if he had seen, walking over the moor behind him, the very same Irishwoman who had taken his part upon the road? But whether it was that he looked too little behind him, or whether it was that she kept out of sight behind the rocks and knolls, he never saw her, though she saw him.

And now he began to get a little hungry, and very thirsty; for he had run a long way, and the sun had risen high in heaven, and the rock was as hot as an oven, and the air danced reels over it, as it does over a limekiln, till everything round seemed quivering and melting in the glare.

But he could see nothing to eat anywhere, and still less to drink.

So he went on and on, till his head spun round with the heat, and he thought he heard church bells ringing, a long way off.

"Ah!" he thought, "where there is a church there will be houses and people; and, perhaps, some one will give me a bit and a sup." So he set off again, to look for the church; for he was sure that he heard the bells quite plain.

And so it was; for from the top of the mountain he could see—what could he not see?

And in a minute more, when he looked round, he stopped again, and said, "Why, what a big place the world is!"

Behind him, far below, was Harthover, and the dark woods, and the shining salmon river; and on his left, far below, was the town, and the smoking chimneys of the collieries; and far, far away, the river widened to the shining sea; and little white specks, which were ships, lay on its bosom. Before him lay, spread out like a map, great plains, and farms, and villages, amid dark knots of trees. They all seemed at his very feet; but he had sense to see that they were long miles away.

And to his right rose moor after moor, hill after hill, till they faded away, blue into blue sky. But between him and those moors, and really at his very feet, lay something, to which, as soon as Tom saw it, he determined to go; for that was the place for him.

A deep, deep green and rocky valley, very narrow, and filled with wood; but through the wood, hundreds of feet below him, he could see a clear stream glance. Oh, if he could but get down to that stream! Then, by the stream, he saw the roof of a little cottage, and a little garden

set out in squares and beds. And there was a tiny little red thing moving in the garden, no bigger than a fly. As Tom looked down, he saw that it was a woman in a red petticoat. Ah! perhaps she would give him something to eat. And there were the church bells ringing again. Surely there must be a village down there. Well, nobody would know him, or what had happened at the Place. The news could not have got there yet, even if Sir John had set all the policemen in the country after him; and he could get down there in five minutes.

Tom was quite right about the hue and cry not having got thither; for he had come, without knowing it, the best part of ten miles from Harthover; but he was wrong about getting down in five minutes, for the cottage was more than a mile off, and a good thousand feet below.

However, down he went, like a brave little man as he was, though he was very footsore, and tired, and hungry, and thirsty; while the church bells rang so loud, he began to think that they must be inside his own head, and the river chimed and tinkled far below.

CHAPTER II

MILE off, and a thousand feet down. So Tom found it, though it seemed as if he could have chucked a pebble onto the back of the woman in the red petticoat who was weeding in the garden, or even across the dale to the rocks beyond.

TOM WENT DOWN

For the bottom of the valley was just one field broad, and on the other side ran the stream; and above it, gray crag, gray down, gray stair, gray moor walled up to heaven.

A quiet, silent, rich, happy place; a narrow crack cut deep into the earth; so deep, and so

out of the way, that the bad bogies can hardly find it out. The name of the place is Vendale.

So Tom went to go down; and first he went down three hundred feet of steep heather, mixed up with loose brown gritstone, as rough as a file; which was not pleasant to his poor little heels, as he came bump, stump, jump, down the steep. And still he thought he could throw a stone into the garden.

Then he went down three hundred feet of limestone terraces, one below the other, as straight as if a carpenter had ruled them with his ruler and then cut them out with his chisel. There was no heath there, but—

First, a little grass slope, covered with the prettiest flowers, rockrose and saxifrage, and thyme and basil, and all sorts of sweet herbs.

Then bump down a two-foot step of limestone.

Then another bit of grass and flowers.

Then bump down a one-foot step.

Then another bit of grass and flowers for fifty yards, as steep as the house-roof, where he had to slide down.

Then another step of stone, ten feet high; and there he had to stop himself, and crawl along the edge to find a crack; for if he had rolled over, he would have rolled right into the old woman's garden, and frightened her out of her wits.

Then, when he had found a dark, narrow crack, full of green stalked fern, such as hangs in the basket in the drawing-room, and had crawled down through it, with knees and elbows, as he would down a chimney, there was another

grass slope, and another step, and so on, till—oh, dear me! I wish it was all over; and so did he. And yet he thought he could throw a stone into the old woman's garden.

At last he came to a bank of beautiful shrubs: whitebeam, with its great silver-backed leaves, and mountain ash, and oak; and below them cliff and crag, cliff and crag, with great beds of crown ferns and wood sedge; while through the shrubs he could see the stream sparkling, and hear it murmur on the white pebbles. He did not know that it was three hundred feet below.

And all the while he never saw the Irish-woman coming down behind him.

But he was getting terribly tired now. The burning sun on the fells had sucked him up; but the damp heat of the woody crag sucked him up still more; and the perspiration ran out of the ends of his fingers and toes, and washed him cleaner than he had been for a whole year. But, of course, he dirtied everything terribly as he went. There has been a great black smudge all down the crag ever since. And there have been more black beetles in Vendale since than ever were known before; all, of course, owing to Tom's having blacked the original papa of them all, just as he was setting off to be married, with a sky-blue coat and scarlet leggings, as smart as a gardener's dog with a polyanthus in his mouth.

At last he got to the bottom. But, behold, it was not the bottom—as people usually find when they are coming down a mountain. For

at the foot of the crag were heaps and heaps of fallen limestone of every size from that of your head to that of a stage-waggon, with holes between them full of sweet heath fern; and before Tom got through them, he was out in the bright sunshine again; and then he felt, once for all and suddenly, as people generally do, that he was b-e-a-t, beat.

You must expect to be beat a few times in your life, little man, if you live such a life as a man ought to live, let you be as strong and healthy as you may; and when you are, you will find it a very ugly feeling. I hope that that day you may have a stout, staunch friend by you who is not beat; for, if you have not, you had best lie where you are, and wait for better times, as poor Tom did.

He could not get on. The sun was burning, and yet he felt chill all over. He was quite empty, and yet he felt quite sick. There was but two hundred yards of smooth pasture between him and the cottage, and yet he could not walk down it. He could hear the stream murmuring only one field beyond it, and yet it seemed to him as if it was a hundred miles off.

He lay down on the grass till the beetles ran over him, and the flies settled on his nose. I don't know when he would have got up again, if the gnats and the midges had not taken compassion on him. But the gnats blew their trumpets so loud in his ear, and the midges nibbled so at his hands and face wherever they could find a place free from soot, that at last he

woke up, and stumbled away, down over a low wall, and into a narrow road, and up to the cottage door.

And a neat, pretty cottage it was, with clipped yew hedges all round the garden, and yews inside, too, cut into peacocks and trumpets and teapots and all kinds of queer shapes. And out of the open door came a noise like that of the frogs, when they know that it is going to be scorching hot to-morrow—and how they know that I don't know, and you don't know, and nobody knows.

He came slowly up to the open door, which was all hung round with clematis and roses; and then peeped in, half afraid.

And there sat by the empty fireplace, which was filled with a pot of sweet herbs, the nicest old woman that ever was seen, in her red petticoat, and short dimity bedgown, and clean white cap, with a black silk handkerchief over it, tied under her chin. At her feet sat the grandfather of all the cats; and opposite her sat, on two benches, twelve or fourteen neat, rosy, chubby little children, learning their Chris-cross-row;[11] and gabble enough they made about it.

Such a pleasant cottage it was, with a shiny clean stone floor, and curious old prints on the walls, and an old black oak sideboard full of bright pewter and brass dishes, and a cuckoo clock in the corner, which began shouting as soon as Tom appeared; not that it was fright-

11. *Chris-cross-row* is an old name for the alphabet.

THE OLD DAME CAME TO TOM

ened at Tom, but that it was just eleven o'clock.

All the children started at Tom's dirty black figure,—the girls began to cry, and the boys began to laugh, and all pointed at him rudely enough; but Tom was too tired to care for that.

"What art thou, and what dost want?" cried

the old dame. "A chimney-sweep! Away with thee! I'll have no sweeps here."

"Water," said poor little Tom, quite faint.

"Water? There's plenty i' the beck," she said, quite sharply.

"But I can't get there; I'm most clemmed with hunger and drought." And Tom sank down upon the doorstep, and laid his head against the post.

And the old dame looked at him through her spectacles one minute, and two, and three; and then she said, "He's sick; and a bairn's a bairn, sweep or none."

"Water," said Tom.

"God forgive me!" and she put by her spectacles, and rose, and came to Tom. "Water's bad for thee; I'll give thee milk." And she toddled off into the next room, and brought a cup of milk and a bit of bread.

Tom drank the milk off at one draught, and then looked up, revived.

"Where didst come from?" said the dame.

"Over Fell, there," said Tom, and pointed up into the sky.

"Over Harthover? and down Lewthwaite Crag? Art sure thou are not lying?"

"Why should I?" said Tom, and leant his head against the post.

"And how got ye up there?"

"I came over from the Place;" and Tom was so tired and desperate he had no heart or time to think of a story, so he told all the truth in a few words.

"Bless thy little heart! And thou hast not been stealing, then?"

"No."

"Bless thy little heart; and I'll warrant not. Why, God's guided the bairn, because he was innocent! Away from the Place, and over Harthover Fell, and down Lewthwaite Crag! Who ever heard the like, if God hadn't led him? Why dost not eat thy bread?"

"I can't."

"It's good enough, for I made it myself."

"I can't," said Tom, and he laid his head on his knees, and then asked:

"Is it Sunday?"

"No, then; why should it be?"

"Because I hear the church bells ringing so."

"Bless thy pretty heart! The bairn's sick. Come wi' me, and I'll hap thee up somewhere. If thou wert a bit cleaner I'd put thee in my own bed, for the Lord's sake. But come along here."

But when Tom tried to get up, he was so tired and giddy that she had to help him and lead him.

She put him in an outhouse, upon soft, sweet hay and an old rug, and bade him sleep off his walk, and she would come to him when school was over, in an hour's time.

And so she went in again, expecting Tom to fall fast asleep at once.

But Tom did not fall asleep.

Instead of it he turned and tossed and kicked about in the strangest way, and felt so hot all over that he longed to get into the river and cool himself; and then he fell half asleep, and dreamt

that he heard the little white lady crying to him, "Oh, you're so dirty; go and be washed;" and then that he heard the Irishwoman saying, "Those that wish to be clean, clean they will be." And then he heard the church bells ring so loud, close to him too, that he was sure it must be Sunday, in spite of what the old dame had said; and he would go to church, and see what a church was like inside, for he had never been in one, poor little fellow, in all his life. But the people would never let him come in, all over soot and dirt like that. He must go to the river and wash first. And he said out loud again and again, though being half asleep he did not know it, "I must be clean, I must be clean."

And all of a sudden he found himself, not in the outhouse on the hay, but in the middle of a meadow, over the road, with the stream just before him, saying continually, "I must be clean, I must be clean." He had got there on his own legs, between sleep and awake, as children will often get out of bed, and go about the room, when they are not quite well. But he was not a bit surprised, and went on to the bank of the brook, and lay down on the grass, and looked into the clear, clear, limestone water, with every pebble at the bottom bright and clean, while the little silver trout dashed about in fright at the sight of his black face; and he dipped his feet in and found it so cool, cool, cool; and he said, "I will be a fish; I will swim in the water; I must be clean, I must be clean."

So he pulled off all his clothes in such haste

that he tore some of them, which was easy enough with such ragged old things. And he put his poor, hot, sore feet into the water; and then his legs; and the farther he went in, the more the church bells rang in his head.

"Ah," said Tom, "I must be quick and wash myself; the bells are ringing quite loud now; and they will stop soon, and then the door will shut, and I shall never be able to get in at all."

HE DIPPED HIS FEET IN

And all the while he never saw the Irishwoman, not behind him this time, but before.

For just before he came to the riverside, she had stept down into the cool, clear water; and her shawl and her petticoat floated off her, and the green water weeds floated round her sides, and the white water lilies floated round her head, and the fairies of the stream came up from the bottom and bore her away and down upon their

arms; for she was the queen of them all; and perhaps of more besides.

"Where have you been?" they asked her.

"I have been smoothing sick folks' pillows, and whispering sweet dreams into their ears; opening cottage casements, to let out the stifling air; coaxing little children away from gutters and foul pools where fever breeds; turning women

SHE WAS THE QUEEN OF THEM ALL

from the ginshop door, and staying men's hands as they were going to strike their wives; doing all I can to help those who will not help themselves; and little enough that is, and weary work for me. But I have brought you a new little brother, and watched him safe all the way here."

Then all the fairies laughed for joy at the thought that they had a little brother coming.

"But mind, maidens, he must not see you, or know that you are here. He is but a savage now, and like the beasts which perish; and from the beasts which perish he must learn. So you must not play with him, or speak to him, or let him see you; but only keep him from being harmed."

Then the fairies were sad, because they could not play with their new brother; but they always did what they were told. And their queen floated away down the river; and whither she went, thither she came.

But all this Tom, of course, never saw or heard; and perhaps if he had it would have made little difference in the story; for he was so hot and thirsty, and longed so to be clean for once, that he tumbled himself as quick as he could into the clear, cool stream.

And he had not been in it two minutes before he fell fast asleep, into the quietest, sunniest, coziest sleep that ever he had in his life; and he dreamt about the green meadows by which he had walked that morning, and the tall elm trees and the sleeping cows; and after that he dreamt of nothing at all.

The reason of his falling into such a delightful sleep is very simple; and yet hardly any one has found it out. It was merely that the fairies took him.

The kind old dame came back at twelve, when school was over, to look at Tom; but there was no Tom there. She looked about for his foot-prints; but the ground was so hard that there

was no slot, as they say in dear old North Devon.

So the old dame went in again, quite sulky, thinking that little Tom had tricked her with a false story, and shammed ill, and then run away again.

* * * *

When Sir John and the rest of them had run themselves out of breath, and lost Tom, they went back again, looking very foolish. And they looked more foolish still when Sir John heard more of the story from the nurse; and more foolish still, again, when they heard the whole story from Miss Ellie, the little lady in white.

All she had seen was a poor little black chimney-sweep, crying and sobbing, and going to get up the chimney again. Of course, she was very much frightened; and no wonder. But that was all. The boy had taken nothing in the room; by the mark of his little sooty feet, they could see that he had never been off the hearth rug till the nurse caught hold of him. It was all a mistake.

So Sir John told Grimes to go home, and promised him five shillings if he would bring the boy quietly up to him, without beating him, that he might be sure of the truth. For he took it for granted, and Grimes too, that Tom had made his way home.

But no Tom came back to Mr. Grimes that evening; and he went to the police office, to tell them to look out for the boy. But no Tom was heard of.

So Mr. Grimes came up to Harthover next

day with a very sour face; but when he got there, Sir John was over the hills and far away; and Mr. Grimes had to sit in the outer servants' hall all day, and drink strong ale to wash away his sorrows; and they were washed away long before Sir John came back.

For good Sir John had slept very badly that night; and he said to his lady, "My dear, the boy must have got over into the grouse moors, and lost himself; and he lies very heavily on my conscience, poor little lad. But I know what I will do."

So, at five the next morning up he got, and bade them bring his shooting pony, and the keeper to come on his pony, and the huntsman, and the first whip, and the second whip, and the underkeeper with the bloodhound in a leash—a great dog as tall as a calf, of the colour of a gravel walk, with mahogany ears and nose, and a throat like a church bell. They took him up to the place where Tom had gone into the wood; and there the hound lifted up his mighty voice, and told them all he knew.

Then he took them to the place where Tom had climbed the wall; and they shoved it down, and all got through.

And then the wise dog took them over the moor, and over the fells, step by step, very slowly; for the scent was a day old, you know, and very light from the heat and drought. But that was why cunning old Sir John started at five in the morning.

And at last he came to the top of Lewthwaite

Crag, and there he bayed, and looked up in their faces, as much as to say, "I tell you he is gone down here!"

They could hardly believe that Tom would have gone so far; and when they looked at that awful cliff, they could never believe that he would have dared to face it. But if the dog said so, it must be true.

"Heaven forgive us!" said Sir John. "If we find him at all, we shall find him lying at the bottom." And he slapped his great hand upon his great thigh, and said:

"Who will go down over Lewthwaite Crag, and see if that boy is alive? Oh, that I were twenty years younger, and I would go down myself!" And so he would have done, as well as any sweep in the country. Then he said:

"Twenty pounds to the man who brings me that boy alive!" And as was his way, what he said he meant.

Now among the lot was a little groom-boy, a very little groom indeed; and he was the same who had ridden up the court, and told Tom to come to the Hall; and he said:

"Twenty pounds or none, I will go down over Lewthwaite Crag, if it's only for the poor boy's sake. For he was as civil a spoken little chap as ever climbed a flue."

So down over Lewthwaite Crag he went; a very smart groom he was at the top, and a very shabby one at the bottom; for he tore his gaiters, and he tore his breeches, and he tore his jacket, and he burst his braces, and he burst his boots,

THE OLD DAME CAME OUT TOO

and he lost his hat, and what was worst of all, he lost his shirt pin, which he prized very much, for it was gold; so it was a really severe loss; but he never saw anything of Tom.

And all the while Sir John and the rest were riding round, full three miles to the right, and

back again, to get into Vendale, and to the foot of the crag.

When they came to the old dame's school, all the children came out to see. And the old dame came out too; and when she saw Sir John, she curtsied very low, for she was a tenant of his.

"Well, dame, and how are you?" said Sir John.

"Blessings on you as broad as your back, Harthover," says she—she didn't call him Sir John, but only Harthover, for that is the fashion in the North country—"and welcome into Vendale; but you're no hunting the fox this time of the year?"

"I am hunting, and strange game too," said he.

"Blessings on your heart, and what makes you look so sad the morn?"

"I'm looking for a lost child, a chimney-sweep, that is run away."

"Oh, Harthover, Harthover," says she, "ye were always a just man and a merciful; and ye'll no harm the poor little lad if I give you tidings of him?"

"Not I, not I, dame. I'm afraid we hunted him out of the house all on a miserable mistake, and the hound has brought him to the top of Lewthwaite Crag, and—"

Whereat the old dame broke out crying, without letting him finish his story.

"So he told me the truth after all, poor little dear! Ah, first thoughts are best, and a body's heart'll guide them right, if they will but hearken to it." And then she told Sir John all.

"Bring the dog here, and lay him on," said Sir John, without another word, and he set his teeth very hard.

And the dog opened at once; and went away at the back of the cottage, over the road, and over the meadow, and through a bit of alder copse; and there, upon an alder stump, they saw Tom's clothes lying. And then they knew as much about it all as there was any need to know.

And Tom?

Ah, now comes the most wonderful part of this wonderful story. Tom, when he woke, for of course he woke—children always wake after they have slept exactly as long as is good for them—found himself swimming about in the stream, being about four inches, or—that I may be accurate—3.87902 inches long, and having round the parotid region of his fauces a set of external gills (I hope you understand all the big words) just like those of a sucking eft, which he mistook for a lace frill, till he pulled at them, found he hurt himself, and made up his mind that they were part of himself, and best left alone.

In fact, the fairies had turned him into a water baby.

A water baby? You never heard of a water baby? Perhaps not. That is the very reason why this story was written. There are a great many things in the world which you never heard of; and a great many more which nobody ever heard of; and a great many things, too, which nobody will ever hear of.

No water babies, indeed? Why, wise men of old said that everything on earth had its double in the water; and you may see that that is, if not quite true, still quite as true as most other theories which you are likely to hear for many a day. There are land babies—then why not water babies? *Are there not water rats, water flies, water crickets, water crabs, water tortoises, water scorpions, water tigers and so on without end?*

Am I in earnest? Oh dear no! Don't you know that this is a fairy tale, and all fun and pretense; and that you are not to believe one word of it, even if it is true?

But at all events, so it happened to Tom. And, therefore, the keeper and the groom, and Sir John made a great mistake, and were very unhappy (Sir John, at least) without any reason when they found a black thing in the water, and said it was Tom's body and that he had been drowned. They were utterly mistaken. Tom was quite alive; and cleaner, and merrier, than he had ever been. The fairies had washed him, you see, in the swift river, so thoroughly, that not only his dirt, but his whole husk and shell had been washed quite off him, and the pretty little real Tom was washed out of the inside of it, and swam away, as a caddis[12] does when its case of stones and silk is bored through,

12. The caddis worm, while it lives in the water, builds for itself a case of stones or grass or shells, all bound together with silk. When the time for its transformation is near, the worm seals up with silk both ends of its case, and remains withdrawn until it is ready to change to a caddis fly.

and away it goes on its back, paddling to the shore, there to split its skin, and fly away as a caperer, on four fawn-coloured wings, with long legs and horns. They are foolish fellows, the caperers, and fly into the candle at night, if you leave the door open. We will hope Tom will be wiser, now he has got safe out of his sooty old shell.

But good Sir John did not understand all this, and he took it into his head that Tom was drowned. When they looked into the empty pockets of his shell, and found no jewels there, nor money—nothing but three marbles, and a brass button with a string to it—then Sir John did something as like crying as ever he did in his life, and blamed himself more bitterly than he need have done. So he cried, and groom-boy cried, and the huntsman cried, and the dame cried, and the little girl cried, and the dairymaid cried, and the old nurse cried (for it was somewhat her fault), and my lady cried, for though people have wigs, that is no reason why they should not have hearts; but the keeper did not cry, though he had been so good-natured to Tom the morning before; for he was so dried up with running after poachers, that you could no more get tears out of him than milk out of leather; and Grimes did not cry, for Sir John gave him ten pounds, and he drank it all in a week.

Sir John sent, far and wide, to find Tom's father and mother; but he might have looked till Doomsday for them, for one was

dead, and the other was in Botany Bay.[13] And the little girl would not play with her dolls for a whole week, and never forgot poor little Tom. And soon my lady put a pretty little tombstone over Tom's shell in the little churchyard in Vendale, where the old dalesmen all sleep side by side between the limestone crags. And the dame decked it with garlands every Sunday, till she grew so old that she could not stir abroad; then the little children decked it for her. And always she sang an old, old song, as she sat spinning what she called her wedding dress. The children could not understand it, but they liked it none the less for that; for it was very sweet and very sad; and that was enough for them. And these are the words of it:—

"When all the world is young, lad,
And all the trees are green;
And every goose a swan, lad,
And every lass a queen;
Then hey for boot and horse, lad,
And round the world away;
Young blood must have its course, lad,
And every dog his day.

"When all the world is old, lad,
And all the trees are brown;
And all the sport is stale, lad,
And all the wheels run down;

13. *Botany Bay* was originally the name of a settlement established in New South Wales, in Eastern Australia, for the reception of criminals from England. Later, the name came to be applied to any distant colony to which criminals were transported.

Creep home, and take your place there,
The spent and maimed among;
God grant you find one face there,
You loved when all was young."

Those are the words, but they are only the body of it; the soul of the song was the dear old woman's sweet face, and sweet voice, and the sweet old air to which she sang; and that, alas! one cannot put on paper. And at last she grew so stiff and lame, that the angels were forced to carry her; and they helped her on with her wedding dress, and carried her up over Harthover Fells, and a long way beyond that too; and there was a new schoolmistress in Vendale.

And all the while Tom was swimming about in the river, with a pretty little lace collar of gills about his neck, as lively as a grig, and as clean as a fresh-run salmon.

Now, if you don't like my story, then go to the schoolroom and learn your multiplication table, and see if you like that better. Some people, no doubt, would do so. So much the better for us, if not for them. It takes all sorts, they say, to make a world.

CHAPTER III

TOM was now quite amphibious, and what is better still, he was clean. For the first time in his life he felt how comfortable it was to have nothing on him but himself. But he only enjoyed it; he did not know it, or think about it; just as you enjoy life and health, and yet never think about being alive and healthy; and may it be long before you have to think about it!

He did not remember having ever been dirty. Indeed, he did not remember any of his old troubles—being tired, or hungry, or sent up dark chimneys. Since that sweet sleep, he had forgotten all about his master, and Harthover Place, and the little white girl, and in a word all that had happened to him when he lived before; and what was best of all, he had forgotten all the bad words which he had learned from Grimes, and the rude boys with whom he used to play.

That is not strange; for you know, when you came into this world, and became a land baby, you remembered nothing. So why should he, when he became a water baby?

But Tom was very happy in the water. He had been sadly overworked in the land world; and so now, to make up for that, he had nothing but holidays in the water world for a long, long time to come. He had nothing to do now but enjoy himself, and look at all the pretty things

which are to be seen in the cool, clear water world, where the sun is never too hot and the frost is never too cold.

And what did he live on? Water cresses, perhaps; or perhaps water gruel, and water milk; too many land babies do so likewise. But we do not know what one tenth of the water-things eat; so we are not answerable for the water babies.

Sometimes he went along the smooth gravel water-ways, looking at the crickets which ran in and out among the stones, as rabbits do on land; or he climbed over the ledges of rock, and saw the sand pipes hanging in thousands, with every one of them a pretty little head and legs peeping out; or he went into a still corner, and watched the caddises eating dead sticks as greedily as you would eat plum pudding, and building their houses with silk and glue. Very fanciful ladies they were; none of them would keep to the same materials for a day. One would begin with some pebbles; then she would stick on a piece of green wood; then she found a shell, and stuck it on too; and the poor shell was alive, and did not like at all being taken to build houses with; but the caddis did not let him have any voice in the matter, being rude and selfish, as vain people are apt to be; then she stuck on a piece of rotten wood, then a very smart pink stone, and so on, till she was patched all over like an Irishman's coat. Then she found a long straw, five times as long as herself, and said, "Hurrah! my sister has a tail, and I'll have one too;" and she stuck

it on her back, and marched about with it quite proud, though it was very inconvenient indeed. And, at that, tails became all the fashion among the caddis-baits in that pool, and they all toddled about with long straws sticking out behind, getting between each other's legs, and tumbling over each other, and looking so ridiculous, that Tom laughed at them till he cried.

Then sometimes he came to a deep, still reach; and there he saw the water forests. They would have looked to you only little weeds; but Tom, you must remember, was so little that everything looked a hundred times as big to him as it does to you, just as things do to a minnow, who sees and catches the little water creatures which you can only see in a microscope.

And in the water forest he saw the water monkeys and water squirrels (they had all six legs, though; everything, almost, has six legs in the water, except efts and water babies); and nimbly enough they ran among the branches. There were water flowers there too, in thousands; and Tom tried to pick them; but as soon as he touched them, they drew themselves in and turned into knots of jelly; and then Tom saw that they were all alive—bells, and stars, and wheels, and flowers, of all beautiful shapes and colours; and all alive and busy, just as Tom was. So now he found that there was a great deal more in the world than he had fancied at first sight.

Now you must know that all the things under the water talk; only not such a language as ours;

but such as horses, and dogs, and cows, and birds talk to each other; and Tom soon learned to understand them and talk to them; so that he might have had very pleasant company if he had only been a good boy. But I am sorry to say, he was too like some other little boys, very fond of hunting and tormenting creatures for mere sport, till they were all afraid of him, and got out of his way, or crept into their shells; so he had no one to speak to or play with.

The water fairies, of course, were very sorry to see him so unhappy, and longed to take him, and tell him how naughty he was, and teach him to be good, and to play and romp with him, too; but they had been forbidden to do that. Tom had to learn his lesson for himself by sound and sharp experience, as many another foolish person has to do, though there may be many a kind heart yearning over them all the while, and longing to teach them what they can only teach themselves.

At last one day he found a caddis, and wanted it to peep out of its house; but its house door was shut. He had never seen a caddis with a house door before; so what must he do, the meddlesome little fellow, but pull it open, to see what the poor lady was doing inside. What a shame! How should you like to have any one breaking your bedroom door in, to see how you looked when you were in bed? So Tom broke to pieces the door, which was the prettiest little grating of silk, stuck all over with shining bits of crystal; and when he looked in, the caddis

poked out her head, and it had turned into just the shape of a bird's. But when Tom spoke to her she could not answer; for her mouth and face were tight tied up in a new nightcap of neat pink skin. However, if she didn't answer, all the other caddises did; for they held up their hands and shrieked: "Oh, you nasty, horrid boy; there you are at it again! And she had just laid herself up for a fortnight's sleep, and then she would have come out with such beautiful wings, and flown about, and laid such lots of eggs; and now you have broken her door, and she can't mend it because her mouth is tied up for a fortnight, and she will die. Who sent you here to worry us out of our lives?"

So Tom swam away. He was very much ashamed of himself, and felt all the naughtier; as little boys do when they have done wrong and won't say so.

Then he came to a pool full of little trout, and began tormenting them, and trying to catch them; but they slipped through his fingers, and jumped clean out of water in their fright. But as Tom chased them, he came close to a great dark hover under an alder root, and out floushed a huge old brown trout ten times as big as he was, and ran right against him, and knocked all the breath out of his body; and I don't know which was the more frightened of the two.

Then he went on sulky and lonely, as he deserved to be; and under a bank he saw a very ugly, dirty creature sitting, about half as big as himself; which had six legs and a big stomach,

and a most ridiculous head with two great eyes and a face just like a donkey's.

"Oh," said Tom, "you are an ugly fellow to be sure!" and he began making faces at him; and put his nose close to him, and halloed at him like a very rude boy.

When, hey presto; all the thing's donkey-face came off in a moment, and out popped a long arm with a pair of pincers at the end of it, and caught Tom by the nose. It did not hurt him much; but it held him quite tight.

"Yah, ah! Oh, let me go!" cried Tom.

"Then let me go," said the creature. "I want to be quiet. I want to split."

Tom promised to let him alone, and he let go. "Why do you want to split?" said Tom.

"Because my brothers and sisters have all split, and turned into beautiful creatures with wings; and I want to split too. Don't speak to me. I am sure I shall split. I will split!"

Tom stood still and watched him. And he swelled himself, and puffed, and stretched himself out stiff, and at last—crack, puff, bang—he opened all down his back, and then up to the top of his head.

And out of his inside came the most slender, elegant, soft creature, as soft and smooth as Tom, but very pale and weak, like a little child who has been ill a long time in a dark room. It moved its legs very feebly; and looked about it half ashamed, like a girl when she goes for the first time into a ballroom; and then it began walking slowly up a grass stem to the top of the water.

Tom was so astonished that he never said a word, but he stared with all his eyes. And he went up to the top of the water too, and peeped out to see what would happen.

And as the creature sat in the warm, bright sun, a wonderful change came over it. It grew strong and firm; the most lovely colours began to show on its body—blue and yellow and black, spots and bars and rings; out of its back rose four great wings of bright brown gauze; and its eyes grew so large that they filled all its head, and shone like ten thousand diamonds.

"Oh, you beautiful creature!" said Tom; and he put out his hand to catch it.

But the thing whirred up into the air, and hung poised on its wings a moment, and then settled down again by Tom quite fearless.

"No!" it said, "you cannot catch me. I am a dragon fly now, the king of all flies; and I shall dance in the sunshine, and hawk over the river, and catch gnats, and have a beautiful wife like myself. I know what I shall do. Hurrah!" And he flew away into the air, and began catching gnats.

"Oh! come back, come back," cried Tom, "you beautiful creature. I have no one to play with, and I am so lonely here. If you will but come back I will never try to catch you."

"I don't care whether you do or not," said the dragon fly; "for you can't. But when I have had my dinner, and looked a little about this pretty place, I will come back, and have a little chat about all I have seen in my travels.

TOM AND THE DRAGON FLY

Why, what a huge tree this is! and what huge leaves on it!"

It was only a big dock: but you know the dragon fly had never seen any but little water trees; starwort, and milfoil, and water crowfoot, and such like; so it did look very big to him.

Besides, he was very shortsighted, as all dragon flies are; and never could see a yard before his nose; any more than a great many other folks, who are not half as handsome as he.

The dragon fly did come back, and chatted away with Tom. He was a little conceited about his fine colours and his large wings; but you know, he had been a poor, dirty, ugly creature all his life before; so there were great excuses for him. He was very fond of talking about all the wonderful things he saw in the trees and meadows; and Tom liked to listen to him, for he had forgotten all about them. So in a little while they became great friends.

And I am very glad to say that Tom learned such a lesson that day, that he did not torment creatures for a long time after. And then the caddises grew quite tame, and used to tell him strange stories about the way they built their houses, and changed their skins, and turned at last into winged flies, till Tom began to long to change his skin, and have wings like them some day.

And the trout and he made it up (for trout very soon forget if they have been frightened and hurt). So Tom used to play with them at hare and hounds, and great fun they had; and he used to try to leap out of the water, head over heels, as they did before a shower came on; but somehow he never could manage it. He liked most, though, to see them rising at the flies, as they sailed round and round under the shadow of the great oak, where the beetles fell flop into

the water, and the green caterpillars let themselves down from the boughs by silk ropes for no reason at all; and then changed their foolish minds for no reason at all, either; and hauled themselves up again into the tree, rolling up the rope in a ball between their paws.

And very often Tom caught them just as they touched the water; and caught the alder-flies, and the caperers, and the cock-tailed duns and spinners, yellow, and brown, and claret, and gray, and gave them to his friends the trout. Perhaps he was not quite kind to the flies; but one must do a good turn to one's friends when one can.

And at last he gave up catching even the flies; for he made acquaintance with one by accident and found him a very merry little fellow. And this was the way it happened; and it is all quite true.

He was basking at the top of the water one hot day in July, catching duns and feeding the trout, when he saw a new sort, a dark gray little fellow with a brown head. He was a very little fellow, indeed; but he made the most of himself, as people ought to do. He cocked up his head, and he cocked up his wings, and he cocked up his tail, and, in short, he looked the cockiest little man of all little men. And so he proved to be; for instead of getting away, he hopped upon Tom's finger, and sat there as bold as nine tailors; and he cried out in the tiniest, shrillest, squeakiest little voice you ever heard:

"Much obliged to you indeed; but I don't want it yet."

"Want what?" said Tom, quite taken aback by his impudence.

"Your leg, which you are kind enough to hold out for me to sit on. I must just go and see after my wife for a few minutes. Dear me! what a troublesome business a family is!" (though the idle little rogue did nothing at all, but left his poor wife to lay all the eggs by herself). "When I come back, I shall be glad of it, if you'll be so good as to keep it sticking out just so;" and off he flew.

Tom thought him a very cool sort of personage; and still more so, when in five minutes he came back, and said, "Ah, you were tired waiting? Well, your other leg will do as well."

And he popped himself down on Tom's knee, and began chatting away in his squeaking voice.

"So you live under the water? It's a low place. I lived there for some time, and was very shabby and dirty. But I didn't choose that that should last. So I turned respectable, and came up to the top, and put on this suit. It's a business-like suit, don't you think?"

"Very neat and quiet indeed," said Tom.

"Yes, one must be quiet and neat and respectable, and all that sort of thing for a little, when one becomes a family man. But I'm tired of it, that's the truth. I've done quite enough business, I consider, in the last week, to last me my life. So I shall put on a ball dress, and go out and be a smart man, and see the gay world, and have a dance or two. Why shouldn't one be jolly if one can?"

"And what will become of your wife?"

"Oh! she is a very plain, stupid creature, and that's the truth; and thinks about nothing but eggs. If she chooses to come, why she may; and if not, why I go without her;—and here I go."

And as he spoke, he turned quite pale, and then quite white.

"Why, you're ill!" said Tom. But he did not answer.

"You're dead," said Tom, looking at him as he stood on his knee as white as a ghost.

"No, I ain't!" answered a little squeaking voice over his head. "This is me up here, in my ball dress; and that's my skin. Ha, ha! you could not do such a trick as that!"

And no more Tom could. For the little rogue had jumped clean out of his own skin, and left it standing on Tom's knee, eyes, wings, legs, tail, exactly as if it had been alive.

"Ha, ha!" he said, and he jerked and skipped up and down, never stopping an instant, just as if he had Saint Vitus's dance. "Ain't I a pretty fellow now?"

And so he was; for his body was white, and his tail orange, and his eyes all the colours of a peacock's tail. And what was the oddest of all, the whisks at the end of his tail had grown five times as long as they were before.

"Ah!" said he, "now I will see the gay world. My living won't cost me much, for I have no mouth, you see, and no inside; so I can never be hungry nor have the stomach ache neither."

No more he had. He had grown as dry and

hard and empty as a quill, as such silly, shallow-hearted fellows deserve to grow.

But instead of being ashamed of his emptiness, he was quite proud of it, as a good many fine gentlemen are, and began flirting and flipping up and down, and singing:

"My wife shall dance, and I shall sing,
So merrily pass the day;
For I hold it for quite the wisest thing,
To drive dull care away."

And he danced up and down for three days and three nights, till he grew so tired that he tumbled into the water and floated down. But what became of him Tom never knew, and he himself never minded; for Tom heard him singing to the last, as he floated down:

"To drive dull care away-ay-ay!"

And if he did not care, why nobody else cared, either.

But one day Tom had a new adventure. He was sitting on a water-lily leaf, he and his friend the dragon fly, watching the gnats dance. The dragon fly had eaten as many as he wanted, and was sitting quite still and sleepy, for it was very hot and bright. The gnats (who did not care the least for the death of their poor brothers) danced a foot over his head quite happily, and a large black fly settled within an inch of his nose, and began washing his own face and combing his hair with his paws; but the dragon fly never stirred, and kept on chatting to Tom.

Suddenly Tom heard the strangest noise up the stream; cooing, and grunting, and whining, and squeaking, as if you had put into a bag two stockdoves, nine mice, three guinea pigs, and a blind puppy, and left them there to settle themselves and make music.

He looked up the water, and there he saw a sight as strange as the noise: a great ball rolling over and over down the stream, seeming one moment of soft brown fur, and the next of shining glass: and yet it was not a ball; for sometimes it broke up and streamed away in pieces, and then it joined again; and all the while the noise came out of it louder and louder.

Tom asked the dragon fly what it could be: but of course, with his short sight, he could not even see it, though it was not ten yards away. So Tom took the neatest little header into the water, and started off to see for himself; and, when he came near, the ball turned out to be four or five beautiful otters, many times larger than Tom, who were swimming about, and rolling, and diving, and twisting, and wrestling, and cuddling, and kissing, and biting, and scratching, in the most charming fashion that ever was seen.

But when the biggest of them saw Tom, she darted out from the rest, and cried in the water language sharply enough, "Quick, children, here is something to eat, indeed!" and came at poor Tom, showing such a wicked pair of eyes, and such a set of sharp teeth in a grinning mouth, that Tom, who had thought her very handsome, said to himself, "Handsome is that handsome

does," and slipped in between the water-lily roots as fast as he could, and then turned round and made faces at her.

"Come out," said the wicked old otter, "or it will be worse for you."

But Tom looked at her from between two thick roots, and shook them with all his might, making horrible faces all the while, just as he used to grin through the railings at the old women, when he lived before. It was not quite well bred, no doubt; but you know, Tom had not finished his education yet.

"Come away, children," said the otter in disgust, "it is not worth eating, after all. It is only a nasty eft, which nothing eats, not even those vulgar pike in the pond."

"I am not an eft!" said Tom; "efts have tails."

"You are an eft," said the otter, very positively; "I see your two hands quite plain, and I know you have a tail."

"I tell you I have not," said Tom. "Look here!" and he turned his pretty little self quite round; and sure enough, he had no more tail than you.

The otter might have got out of it by saying that Tom was a frog; but, like a great many other people, when she had once said a thing she stood to it, right or wrong; so she answered:

"I say you are an eft, and therefore you are, and not fit food for gentlefolk like me and my children. You may stay there till the salmon eat you" (she knew the salmon would not, but she wanted to frighten poor Tom). "Ha! ha!

they will eat you, and we will eat them;" and the otter laughed such a wicked, cruel laugh—as you may hear them do sometimes; and the first time that you hear it you will probably think it is bogies.

"What are salmon?" asked Tom,

"Fish, you eft, great fish, nice fish to eat. They are the lords of the fish, and we are lords of the salmon;" and she laughed again. "We hunt them up and down the pools, and drive them up into a corner, the silly things; they are so proud, and bully the little trout, and the minnows, till they see us coming, and then they are so meek all at once; and we catch them, but we disdain to eat them all; we just bite off their soft throats and suck their sweet juice—Oh, so good!"—(and she licked her wicked lips)—"and then throw them away, and go and catch another. They are coming soon, children, coming soon; I can smell the rain coming up off the sea, and then hurrah for a fresh, and salmon, and plenty of eating all day long."

And the otter grew so proud that she turned head over heels twice, and then stood upright half out of the water, grinning like a Cheshire cat.

"And where do they come from?" asked Tom, who kept himself very close, for he was considerably frightened.

"Out of the sea, eft, the great, wide sea, where they might stay and be safe if they liked.[14] But

14. Salmon live in the sea, as the otter says, but each autumn they go up the rivers to spawn.

out of the sea the silly things come, into the great river down below, and we come up to watch for them; and when they go down again, we go down and follow them. And there we fish for the bass and the pollock, and have jolly days along the shore, and toss and roll in the breakers, and sleep snug in the warm dry crags. Ah, that is a merry life, too, children, if it were not for those horrid men."

"What are men?" asked Tom; but somehow he seemed to know before he asked.

"Two-legged things, eft; and, now I come to look at you, they are actually something like you, if you had not a tail" (she was determined that Tom should have a tail), "only a great deal bigger, worse luck for us; and they catch the fish with hooks and lines, which get into our feet sometimes, and set pots along the rocks to catch lobsters. They speared my poor, dear husband as he went out to find something for me to eat. I was laid up among the crags then, and we were very low in the world, for the sea was so rough that no fish would come in shore. But they speared him, poor fellow, and I saw them carrying him away upon a pole. Ah, he lost his life for your sakes, my children, poor, dear, obedient creature that he was."

And the otter grew so sentimental (for otters can be very sentimental when they choose, like a good many people who are both cruel and greedy, and no good to anybody at all) that she sailed solemnly away down the burn, and Tom saw her no more for that time.

And lucky it was for her that she did so; for no sooner was she gone, than down the bank came seven rough terrier dogs, snuffing and yapping, and grubbing and splashing, in full cry after the otter. Tom hid among the water lilies till they were gone; for he could not guess that they were the water fairies come to help him.

But he could not help thinking of what the otter had said about the great river and the broad sea. And as he thought, he longed to go and see them. He could not tell why; but the more he thought, the more he grew discontented with the narrow little stream in which he lived, and all his companions there; and wanted to get out into the wide, wide world, and enjoy all the wonderful sights of which he was sure it was full.

And once he set off to go down the stream. But the stream was very low; and when he came to the shallows he could not keep under water, for there was no water left to keep under. So the sun burned his back and made him sick; and he went back again and lay quiet in the pool for a whole week more.

And then on the evening of a very hot day he saw a sight.

He had been very stupid all day, and so had the trout; for they would not move an inch to take a fly, though there were thousands on the water, but lay dozing at the bottom under the shade of the stones; and Tom lay dozing too, and was glad to cuddle their smooth, cool sides, for the water was quite warm and unpleasant.

But toward evening it grew suddenly dark, and Tom looked up and saw a blanket of black clouds lying right across the valley above his head, resting on the crags right and left. He felt not quite frightened, but very still; for everything was still. There was not a whisper of wind, nor a chirp of a bird to be heard; and next a few great drops of rain fell plop into the water, and one hit Tom on the nose, and made him pop his head down quickly enough.

And then the thunder roared, and the lightning flashed, and leaped across Vendale and back again, from cloud to cloud, and cliff to cliff, till the very rocks in the stream seemed to shake; and Tom looked up at it through the water, and thought it the finest thing he ever saw in his life.

But out of the water he dared not put his head; for the rain came down by bucketfuls, and the hail hammered like shot on the stream and churned it into foam; and soon the stream rose, and rushed down, higher and higher, and fouler and fouler, full of beetles, and sticks, and straws, and worms, and addle-eggs, and wood lice, and leeches, and odds and ends, and this, that, and the other, enough to fill nine museums.

Tom could hardly stand against the stream, and hid behind a rock. But the trout did not; for out they rushed from among the stones, and began gobbling the beetles and leeches in the most greedy and quarrelsome way, and swimming about with great worms hanging out of

their mouths, tugging and kicking to get them away from each other.

And now, by the flashes of the lightning, Tom saw a new sight—all the bottom of the stream alive with great eels, turning and twisting along, all down stream and away. They had been hiding for weeks past in the cracks of the rocks, and in burrows in the mud; and Tom had hardly even seen them, except now and then at night; but now they were all out, and went hurrying past him so fiercely and wildly that he was quite frightened. And as they hurried past he could hear them say to each other, "We must run, we must run. What a jolly thunderstorm! Down to the sea, down to the sea!"

And then the otter came by with all her brood, twining and sweeping along as fast as the eels themselves; and she spied Tom as she came by, and said:

"Now is your time, eft, if you want to see the world. Come along, children, never mind those nasty eels; we shall breakfast on salmon to-morrow. Down to the sea, down to the sea!"

Then came a flash brighter than all the rest, and by the light of it—in the thousandth part of a second they were gone again—but he had seen them, he was certain of it—three beautiful little white girls, with their arms twined round each other's necks, floating down the torrent, as they sang, "Down to the sea, down to the sea!"

"Oh stay! Wait for me!" cried Tom; but they were gone; yet he could hear their voices clear and sweet through the roar of thunder and

water and wind, singing as they died away, "Down to the sea!"

"Down to the sea!" said Tom; "everything is going to the sea, and I will go too. Good-bye, trout." But the trout were so busy gobbling worms that they never turned to answer him; so that Tom was spared the pain of bidding them farewell.

And now, down the rushing stream, guided by the bright flashes of the storm; past tall birch-fringed rocks, which shone out one moment as clear as day, and the next were dark as night; past dark hovers under swirling banks, from which great trout rushed out on Tom, thinking him to be good to eat, and turned back sulkily, for the fairies sent them home again with a tremendous scolding, for daring to meddle with a water baby; on through narrow strids[15] and roaring cataracts, where Tom was deafened and blinded for a moment by the rushing waters; along deep reaches, where the white water lilies tossed and flapped beneath the wind and hail; past sleeping villages; under dark bridge arches, and away and away to the sea. And Tom could not stop, and did not care to stop; he would see the great world below, and the salmon, and the breakers, and the wide, wide sea.

And when the daylight came, Tom found himself out in the salmon river.

A full hundred yards broad it was, sliding on

15. *Strid* is a word which is very rarely used. It means a narrow place which looks as though it might be crossed at a stride.

from broad pool to broad shallow, and broad shallow to broad pool, over great fields of shingle, under oak and ash coverts, past low cliffs of sandstone, past green meadows, and fair parks, and a great house of gray stone, and brown moors above, and here and there against the sky the smoking chimney of a colliery.

But Tom thought nothing about what the river was like. All his fancy was, to get down to the wide, wide sea.

And after a while he came to a place where the river spread out into broad, still, shallow reaches, so wide that little Tom, as he put his head out of the water, could hardly see across.

And there he stopped. He got a little frightened. "This must be the sea," he thought. "What a wide place it is! If I go on into it I shall surely lose my way, or some strange thing will bite me. I will stop here and look out for the otter, or the eels, or some one to tell me where I shall go."

So he went back a little way, and crept into a crack of the rock, just where the river opened out into the wide shallows, and watched for some one to tell him his way; but the otter and the eels were gone on miles and miles down the stream.

There he waited, and slept too, for he was quite tired with his night's journey; and, when he woke, the stream was clearing to a beautiful amber hue, though it was still very high. And after a while, he saw a sight which made him jump up; for he knew in a moment it was one of the things which he had come to look for.

Such a fish! ten times as big as the biggest trout, and a hundred times as big as Tom, sculling up the stream past him, as easily as Tom had sculled down.

Such a fish! shining silver from head to tail, and here and there a crimson dot; with a grand hooked nose and grand curling lip, and a grand bright eye, looking round him as proudly as a king, and surveying the water right and left as if all belonged to him. Surely he must be the salmon, the king of all the fish.

Tom was so frightened that he longed to creep into a hole; but he need not have been; for salmon are all true gentlemen, and, like true gentlemen, they look noble and proud enough, and yet, like true gentlemen, they never harm or quarrel with any one, but go about their own business, and leave rude fellows to themselves.

The salmon looked at him full in the face, and then went on without minding him, with a swish or two of his tail which made the stream boil again. And in a few minutes came another, and then four or five, and so on: and all passed Tom, rushing and plunging up the cataract with strong strokes of their silver tails, now and then leaping clean out of water and up over a rock, shining gloriously for a moment in the bright sun; while Tom was so delighted that he could have watched them all day long.

And at last one came up bigger than all the rest; but he came slowly, and stopped, and looked back, and seemed very anxious and busy. And Tom saw that he was helping another

salmon, an especially handsome one, who had not a single spot upon it, but was clothed in pure silver from nose to tail.

"My dear," said the great fish to his companion, "you really look dreadfully tired, and you must not overexert yourself at first. Do rest yourself behind this rock;" and he shoved her gently with his nose, to the rock where Tom sat.

You must know that this was the salmon's wife. For salmon, like other true gentlemen, always choose their lady, and love her, and are true to her, and take care of her and work for her, and fight for her, as every true gentleman ought; and are not like vulgar chub and roach and pike, who have no high feelings, and take no care of their wives.

Then he saw Tom, and looked at him very fiercely one moment, as if he was going to bite him.

"What do you want here?" he said, very fiercely.

"Oh, don't hurt me!" cried Tom. "I only want to look at you; you are so handsome."

"Ah?" said the salmon, very stately but very civilly. "I really beg your pardon; I see what you are, my little dear. I have met one or two creatures like you before, and found them very agreeable and well behaved. Indeed, one of them showed me a great kindness lately, which I hope to be able to repay. I hope we shall not be in your way here. As soon as this lady is rested, we shall proceed on our journey."

What a well-bred old salmon he was!

"So you have seen things like me before?" asked Tom.

"Several times, my dear. Indeed, it was only last night that one at the river's mouth came and warned me and my wife of some new stake-nets which had got into the stream, I cannot tell how, since last winter, and showed us the way round them, in the most charmingly obliging way."

THE SALMON LOOKED AT TOM FIERCELY

"So there are babies in the sea?" cried Tom, and clapped his little hands. "Then I shall have some one to play with there? How delightful!"

"Were there no babies up this stream?" asked the lady salmon.

"No! and I grew so lonely. I thought I saw three last night; but they were gone in an in-

stant, down to the sea. So I went too; for I had nothing to play with but caddises and dragon flies and trout."

"Ugh!" cried the lady, "what low company!"

"My dear, if he has been in low company, he has certainly not learnt their low manners," said the salmon.

"No indeed, poor little dear; but how sad for him to live among such people as caddises, who have actually six legs, the nasty things; and dragon flies, too! why they are not even good to eat; for I tried them once, and they are all hard and empty; and as for trout, every one knows what they are." Whereon she curled up her lip, and looked dreadfully scornful, while her husband curled up his too, till he looked as proud as Alcibiades.[16]

"Why do you dislike the trout so?" asked Tom.

"My dear, we do not even mention them, if we can help it; for I am sorry to say they are relations of ours who do us no credit. A great many years ago they were just like us; but they were so lazy, and cowardly, and greedy, that instead of going down to the sea every year to see the world and grow strong and fat, they chose to stay and poke about in the little streams

16. Alcibiades was a particularly handsome and particularly proud Greek, who lived in the time of the great wars between the two Greek states of Athens and Sparta. He took part in these wars, first on the side of Athens, then on the side of Sparta, and finally succeeded in gaining the hatred of both states by his treachery and unscrupulousness. He went into exile, but was finally put to death by the Persians, at the command of the Athenians and Spartans (404 B. C.).

and eat worms and grubs; and they are very properly punished for it; for they have grown ugly and brown and spotted and small; and are actually so degraded in their tastes that they will eat our children."

CHAPTER IV

SO the salmon went up, after Tom had warned them of the wicked old otter; and Tom went down, but slowly and cautiously, coasting along the shore. He was many days about it, for it was many miles down to the sea; and perhaps he would never have found his way, if the fairies had not guided him, without his seeing their faces, or feeling their gentle hands.

And as he went, he had a very strange adventure. It was a clear, still September night, and the moon shone so brightly down through the water that he could not sleep, though he shut his eyes as tight as possible. So at last he came up to the top, and sat upon a little point

of rock, and looked up at the broad yellow moon, and wondered what she was, and thought that she looked at him. And he watched the moonlight on the rippling river, and the black heads of the firs, and the silver-frosted lawns, and listened to the owl's hoot, and the snipe's bleat, and the fox's bark, and the otter's laugh; and smelt the soft perfume of the birches, and the wafts of heather honey off the grouse moor far above; and felt very happy. You, of course, would have been very cold sitting there on a September night, without the least bit of clothes on your wet back; but Tom was a water baby, and therefore felt cold no more than a fish.

Suddenly he saw a beautiful sight. A bright red light moved along the riverside, and threw down into the water a long taproot of flame. Tom, curious little rogue that he was, must needs go and see what it was; so he swam to the shore, and met the light as it stopped over a shallow run at the edge of a low rock.

And there, underneath the light, lay five or six great salmon, looking up at the flame with their great goggle eyes, and wagging their tails, as if they were very much pleased at it.

Tom came to the top, to look at this wonderful light nearer, and made a splash.

And he heard a voice say:

"There was a fish rose."

He did not know what the words meant; but he seemed to know the sound of them, and to know the voice which spoke them; and he saw on the bank three great two-legged creatures,

one of whom held the light, flaring and sputtering, and another a long pole. And he knew that they were men, and was frightened, and crept into a hole in the rock, from which he could see what went on.

The man with the torch bent down over the water, and looked earnestly in; and then he said:

"Tak' that muckle[17] fellow, lad; he's ower fifteen punds; and haud your hand steady."

Tom felt that there was some danger coming, and longed to warn the foolish salmon, who kept staring up at the light as if he was bewitched. But before he could make up his mind, down came the pole through the water; there was a fearful splash and struggle, and Tom saw that the poor salmon was speared right through, and was lifted out of the water.

And then, from behind, there sprang on these three men three other men; and there were shouts, and blows, and words which Tom recollected to have heard before; and he shuddered and turned sick at them now, for he felt somehow that they were strange, and ugly, and wrong, and horrible. And it all began to come back to him. They were men; and they were fighting; savage, desperate, up-and-down fighting, such as Tom had seen too many times before.

And he stopped his little ears, and longed to swim away; and was very glad that he was a

17. *Muckle* is an old English word meaning *large*.

water baby, and had nothing to do any more with horrid dirty men, with foul clothes on their backs, and foul words on their lips; but he dared not stir out of his hole, while the rock shook over his head with the trampling and struggling of the keepers and the poachers.

All of a sudden there was a tremendous splash, and a frightful flash, and a hissing, and all was still.

For into the water, close to Tom, fell one of the men—he who held the light in his hand. Into the swift river he sank, and rolled over and over in the current. Tom heard the men above run along, seemingly looking for him; but he drifted down into the deep hole below, and there lay quite still, and they could not find him.

Tom waited a long time, till all was quiet; and then he peeped out, and saw the man lying. At last he screwed up his courage and swam down to him. "Perhaps," he thought, "the water has made him fall asleep, as it did me."

Then he went nearer. He grew more and more curious, he could not tell why. He must go and look at him. He would go very quietly, of course; so he swam round and round him, closer and closer; and, as he did not stir, at last he came quite close and looked him in the face.

The moon shone so bright that Tom could see every feature; and, as he saw, he recollected, bit by bit; it was his old master, Grimes.

Tom turned tail, and swam away as fast as he could.

"Oh dear me!" he thought, "now he will turn into a water baby. What a nasty, troublesome one he will be! And perhaps he will find me out, and beat me again."

So he went up the river again a little way, and lay there the rest of the night under an alder root; but when morning came, he longed to go down again to the big pool, and see whether Mr. Grimes had turned into a water baby yet.

So he went very carefully, peeping round all the rocks, and hiding under all the roots. Mr. Grimes lay there still; he had not turned into a water baby. In the afternoon Tom went back again. He could not rest till he had found out what had become of Mr. Grimes. But this time Mr. Grimes was gone; and Tom made up his mind that he was turned into a water baby.

He might have made himself easy, poor little man; Mr. Grimes did not turn into a water baby, or anything like one at all. But he did not make himself easy; and a long time he was fearful lest he should meet Grimes suddenly in some deep pool. He could not know that the fairies had carried him away, and put him, where they put everything which falls into the water, exactly where it ought to be.

Then Tom went on down, for he was afraid of staying near Grimes; and as he went, all the vale looked sad. The red and yellow leaves showered down into the river; the flies and beetles were all dead and gone; the chill autumn fog lay low upon the hills, and sometimes spread

itself so thickly on the river that he could not see his way. But he felt his way instead, following the flow of the stream, day after day, past great bridges, past boats and barges, past the great town, with its wharfs, and mills, and tall smoking chimneys, and ships which rode at anchor in the stream; and now and then he ran against their hawsers, and wondered what they were, and peeped out, and saw the sailors lolling on board smoking their pipes; and ducked under again, for he was terribly afraid of being caught by man and turned into a chimney-sweep once more. He did not know that the fairies were close to him always, shutting the sailors' eyes lest they should see him, and turning him aside from millraces, and sewer mouths, and all foul and dangerous things. Poor little fellow, it was a dreary journey for him; and more than once he longed to be back in Vendale, playing with the trout in the bright summer sun. But it could not be. What has been once can never come over again. And people can be little babies, even water babies, only once in their lives.

Besides, people who make up their minds to go and see the world, as Tom did, must needs find it a weary journey. Lucky for them if they do not lose heart and stop halfway, instead of going on bravely to the end as Tom did. For then they will remain neither boys nor men, neither fish, flesh, nor good red herring; having learnt a great deal too much, and yet not enough; and sown their wild oats, without having the advantage of reaping them.

But Tom was always a brave, determined little English bulldog, who never knew when he was beaten; and on and on he held, till he saw a long way off the red buoy through the fog. And then he found, to his surprise, the stream turned round, and running up inland.

It was the tide, of course; but Tom knew nothing of the tide. He only knew that in a minute more the water, which had been fresh, turned salt all round him. And then there came a change over him. He felt as strong, and light, and fresh, as if his veins had run champagne; and gave, he did not know why, three skips out of the water, a yard high, and head over heels, just as the salmon do when they first touch the noble, rich salt water, which, as some wise men tell us, is the mother of all living things.

He did not care now for the tide being against him. The red buoy was in sight, dancing in the open sea; and to the buoy he would go, and to it he went. He passed great shoals of bass and mullet, leaping and rushing in after the shrimps, but he never heeded them, or they him; and once he passed a great, black, shining seal, who was coming in after the mullet. The seal put his head and shoulders out of water, and stared at him, looking exactly like a fat old greasy negro with a gray pate. And Tom, instead of being frightened, said, "How d'ye do, sir; what a beautiful place the sea is!" And the old seal, instead of trying to bite him, looked at him with his soft, sleepy, wink-eyes, and said, "Good tide to you, my little man; are you look-

ing for your brothers and sisters? I passed them all at play outside."

"Oh, then," said Tom, "I shall have playfellows at last," and he swam on to the buoy, and got upon it (for he was quite out of breath) and sat there, and looked round for water babies; but there were none to be seen.

The sea breeze came in freshly with the tide and blew the fog away; and the little waves danced for joy around the buoy, and the old buoy danced with them. The shadows of the clouds ran races over the bright blue sky, and yet never caught each other up; and the breakers plunged merrily upon the wide white sands, and jumped up over the rocks, to see what the green fields inside were like, and tumbled down and broke themselves all to pieces, and never minded it a bit, but mended themselves and jumped up again. And the terns hovered over Tom like huge white dragon flies with black heads, and the gulls laughed like girls at play, and the sea pies, with their red bills and legs, flew to and fro from shore to shore, and whistled sweet and wild. And Tom looked and looked, and listened; and he would have been very happy, if he could only have seen the water babies. Then when the tide turned, he left the buoy, and swam round and round in search of them; but in vain. Sometimes he thought he heard them laughing, but it was only the laughter of the ripples. And sometimes he thought he saw them at the bottom, but it was only white and pink shells. And once he was sure he had found one, for he saw

two bright eyes peeping out of the sand. So he dived down, and began scraping the sand away, and cried, "Don't hide; I do want some one to play with so much!" And out jumped a great turbot with his ugly eyes and mouth all awry, and flopped away along the bottom, knocking poor Tom over. And he sat down at the bottom of the sea, and cried salt tears from sheer disappointment.

TOM WOULD HAVE BEEN QUITE HAPPY

To have come all this way, and faced so many dangers, and yet to find no water babies! How hard! Well, it did seem hard; but people, even little babies, cannot have all they want without waiting for it, and working for it too.

And Tom sat upon the buoy long days, long weeks, looking out to sea, and wondering when the water babies would come back; and yet they never came.

Then he began to ask all the strange things which came in out of the sea if they had seen any: and some said "Yes," and some said nothing at all.

He asked the bass and the pollock; but they were so greedy after the shrimps that they did not care to answer him a word.

Then there came in a whole fleet of purple sea snails, floating along, each on a sponge full of foam; and Tom said, "Where do you come from, you pretty creatures? and have you seen the water babies?"

And the sea snails answered, "Whence we come we know not; and whither we are going, who can tell? We float out our life in the mid-ocean, with the warm sunshine above our heads, and the warm gulf stream below; and that is enough for us. Yes; perhaps we have seen the water babies. We have seen many strange things as we sailed along." And they floated away, the happy, stupid things, and all went ashore upon the sands.

Then there came by a shoal of porpoises, rolling as they went—papas, and mammas, and little children—and all quite smooth and shiny, because the fairies French-polish them every morning; and they sighed so softly as they came by, that Tom took courage to speak to them; but all they answered was, "Hush, hush, hush;" for that was all they had learnt to say.

And then there came by a beautiful creature, like a ribbon of pure silver, with a sharp head and very long teeth; but it seemed very sick and

sad. Sometimes it rolled helpless on its side; and then it dashed away, glittering like white fire; and then it lay sick again, and motionless.

"Where do you come from?" asked Tom. "And why are *you* so sick and sad?"

"I come from the warm Carolinas, and the sandbanks fringed with pines; where the great owl-rays leap and flap, like giant bats, upon the tide. But I wandered north and north, upon the treacherous warm gulf stream, till I met with the cold icebergs, afloat in the mid-ocean. So I got tangled among the icebergs, and chilled with the frozen breath. But the water babies helped me from among them, and set me free again. And now I am mending every day; but I am very sick and sad; and perhaps I shall never get home again to play with the owl-rays any more."

"Oh!" cried Tom. "And you have seen water babies! Have you seen any near here?"

"Yes; they helped me again last night, or I should have been eaten by a great black porpoise."

How vexatious! The water babies close to him, and yet he could not find one.

And then he left the buoy, and used to go along the sands and round the rocks, and come out in the night—like the forsaken Merman[18] in Mr. Arnold's beautiful, beautiful poem, which you

18. This beautiful poem which Kingsley speaks of here is Matthew Arnold's *The Forsaken Merman*, which you will find in Volume IX of these books.

must learn by heart some day—and sit upon a point of rock, among the shining sea weeds, in the low October tides, and cry and call for the water babies; but he never heard a voice call in return. And at last, with his fretting and crying, he grew quite lean and thin.

But one day among the rocks he found a playfellow. It was not a water baby, alas! but it was a lobster; and a very distinguished lobster he was; for he had live barnacles on his claws, which is a great mark of distinction in lobsterdom, and no more to be bought for money than a good conscience or the Victoria Cross.[19]

Tom had never seen a lobster before; and he was mightily taken with this one; for he thought him the most curious, odd, ridiculous creature he had ever seen; and there he was not far wrong; for all the ingenious men, and all the scientific men, and all the fanciful men in the world, with all the old German bogy-painters into the bargain, could never invent, if all their wits were boiled into one, anything so curious, and so ridiculous, as a lobster.

He had one claw knobbed and the other jagged; and Tom delighted in watching him hold on to the seaweed with his knobbed claw, while he cut up salads with his jagged one, and then put them into his mouth, after smelling at them,

19. The Victoria Cross is a decoration awarded British soldiers or sailors for distinguished bravery. The crosses are made from cannon captured in the Crimean War, and bear, under the crowned lion which is the British royal crest, the words "For Valour." No other military decoration is so prized.

like a monkey. And always the little barnacles threw out their casting-nets and swept the water, and came in for their share of whatever there was for dinner.

But Tom was most astonished to see how he fired himself off—snap! like the leapfrogs which you make out of a goose's breastbone. Certainly he took the most wonderful shots, and backwards, too. For, if he wanted to go into a narrow crack ten yards off, what do you think he did? If he had gone in head foremost, of course he could not have turned round. So he used to turn his tail to it, and lay his long horns, which carry his sixth sense in their tips (and nobody knows what that sixth sense is), straight down his back to guide him, and twist his eyes back till they almost came out of their sockets, and then made ready, present, fire, snap!—and away he went, pop into the hole; and peeped out and twiddled his whiskers, as much as to say, "You couldn't do that."

Tom asked him about water babies. "Yes," he said. He had seen them often. But he did not think much of them. They were meddlesome little creatures, and went about helping fish and shells which got into scrapes. Well, for his part, he should be ashamed to be helped by little soft creatures that had not even a shell on their backs. He had lived quite long enough in the world to take care of himself.

He was a conceited fellow, the old lobster, and not very civil to Tom; and you will hear how he had to alter his mind before he was

done, as conceited people generally have. But he was so funny, and Tom so lonely, that he could not quarrel with him; and they used to sit in holes in the rocks, and chat for hours.

And about this time there happened to Tom a very strange and important adventure—so important, indeed, that he was very near never finding the water babies at all; and I am sure you would have been sorry for that.

I hope that you have not forgotten the little white lady all this while. At least, here she comes, looking like a clean, white, good little darling, as she always was and always will be. For it befell in the pleasant short December days, when the wind always blows from the southwest, till Old Father Christmas comes and spreads the great white tablecloth, ready for little boys and girls to give the birds their Christmas dinner of crumbs—it befell (to go on) in the pleasant December days, that Sir John was so busy hunting that nobody at home could get a word out of him. Four days a week he hunted, and very good sport he had; and the other two he went to the bench and the board of guardians, and very good justice he did; and when he got home in time, he dined at five.

It befell (to go on a second time), that Sir John, hunting all day and dining at five, fell asleep every evening, and snored so terribly that all the windows in Harthover shook, and the soot fell down the chimneys. Whereon my Lady, being no more able to get conversation out of him than a song out of a dead nightin-

gale, determined to go off and leave him and the doctor and Captain Swinger, the agent, to snore in concert every evening to their hearts' content. So she started for the seaside with all the children, in order to put herself and them into condition by mild applications of iodine.

Now, it befell that, on the very shore and over the very rocks where Tom was sitting with his friend the lobster, there walked one day the little white lady, Ellie herself, and with her a very wise man indeed—Professor Ptthmlln-sprts.

He was a very worthy, kind, good-natured little old gentleman; and very fond of children, and very good to all the world as long as it was good to him. Only one fault he had, which cock-robins have likewise, as you may see if you look out of the nursery window—that when any one else found a curious worm, he would hop round them, and peck them, and bristle up his feathers, just as a cock-robin would; and declare that he found the worm first; and that it was his worm; and, if not, that then it was not a worm at all.

So Ellie and he were walking on the rocks, and he was showing her about one in ten thousand of all the beautiful and curious things which are to be seen there. But little Ellie was not satisfied with them at all. She liked much better to play with live children, or even with dolls, which she could pretend were alive; and at last she said honestly, "I don't care about all these things, because they can't play

with me, or talk with me. If there were little children now in the water, as there used to be, and I could see them, I should like that."

"Children in the water, you strange little duck?" said the professor.

"Yes," said Ellie. "I know there used to be children in the water, and mermaids too, and mermen. I saw them all in a picture at home, of a beautiful lady sailing in a car drawn by dolphins, and babies flying round her, and one sitting in her lap; and the mermaids swimming and playing, and the mermen trumpeting on conch-shells; and it is called 'The Triumph of Galatea;'[20] and there is a burning mountain in the picture behind. It hangs on the great staircase, and I have looked at it ever since I was a baby, and dreamt about it a hundred times; and it is so beautiful that it must be true."

The professor, however, was not the least of little Ellie's opinion.

"But why are there not water babies?" asked Ellie.

I trust and hope that it was because the professor trod at that moment on the edge of a very sharp mussel, and hurt one of his corns sadly, that he answered quite sharply, forgetting that he was a scientific man, "Because there ain't."

Which was not even good English, my dear little boy; for, as you must know, the professor ought to have said, if he was so angry as to say

20. This picture which little Ellie loved so was a copy of a famous painting by the great Raphael.

anything of the kind—Because there are not: or are none: or are none of them.

And he groped with his net under the weeds so violently, that he caught poor little Tom.

He felt the net very heavy; and lifted it out quickly, with Tom all entangled in the meshes.

"Dear me!" he cried. "What a large pink Holothurian;[21] with hands, too! It must be connected with Synapta." And he took him out.

"It has actually eyes!" he cried. "Why, it must be a Cephalopod! This is most extraordinary!"

"No, I ain't," cried Tom, as loud as he could; for he did not like to be called bad names.

"It is a water baby!" cried Ellie; and of course it was.

"Water-fiddlesticks, my dear!" said the professor; and he turned away sharply.

Now, if the professor had said to Ellie, "Yes, my darling, it is a water baby, and a very wonderful thing it is; and it shows how little I know of the wonders of nature in spite of forty years of honest labour;"—I think that, if the professor had said that, little Ellie would have believed him more firmly, and respected him more deeply, and loved him better, than ever she had done before. But he was of a different opinion. He hesitated a moment. He longed

21. The Holothurians are curious creatures, such as the sea cucumbers or the sea slugs. One genus or class of them is known as the Synapta. These creatures are quite rudimentary, and have, as the professor's next remark will tell you, no eyes. A Cephalopod is higher in the scale, and has well-developed eyes.

to keep Tom, and yet he half wished he never had caught him; and at last he quite longed to get rid of him. So he turned away and poked Tom with his finger, for want of anything better to do; and said carelessly, "My dear little maid, you must have dreamt of water babies last night, your head is so full of them."

Now Tom had been in the most horrible and unspeakable fright all the while; for it was fixed in his little head that if a man with clothes on caught him, he might put clothes on him too, and make a dirty black chimney-sweep of him again. But when the professor poked him, it was more than he could bear; and, between fright and rage, he turned to bay valiantly, and bit the professor's finger till it bled.

"Oh! ah! yah!" cried he; and glad of an excuse to be rid of Tom, dropped him on to the seaweed, and thence he dived into the water and was gone in a moment.

"But it was a water baby, and I heard it speak!" cried Ellie. "Ah, it is gone!" And she jumped off the rock to try and catch Tom.

Too late! and what was worse, as she sprang down, she slipped, and fell some six feet with her head on a sharp rock, and lay quite still.

The professor picked her up, and tried to waken her, and called to her, and cried over her, for he loved her very much; but she would not waken at all. So he took her up in his arms and carried her to her governess, and they all went home; and little Ellie was put to bed, and lay there quite still; only now and then she woke

TOM DIVED

up and called out about the water baby; but no one knew what she meant, and the professor did not tell, for he was ashamed to tell.

And after a week, one moonlight night, the fairies came flying in at the window and brought her such a pretty pair of wings that she could not help putting them on; and she flew with

them out of the window, and over the land, and over the sea, and up through the clouds, and nobody heard or saw anything of her for a very long while.

CHAPTER V

BUT what became of little Tom? He slipped away off the rocks into the water, as I said before. But he could not help thinking of little Ellie. He did not remember who she was; but he knew that she was a little girl, though she was larger than he was now. That is not surprising; size has nothing to do with kindred. A tiny weed may be first cousin to a great tree; and a little dog like Vick knows that Lioness is a dog too, though she is twenty times larger than herself. So Tom knew that Ellie was a little girl, and thought about her all that day, and longed to have had her to play with; but he had soon to think of something else.

And here is the account of what happened to him, as it was published next morning in the Waterproof Gazette, on the finest watered paper, for the use of the great fairy, Mrs. Bedonebyasyoudid, who reads the news very carefully every morning, and especially the police cases.

He was going along the rocks in three-fathom water, watching the pollock catch prawns, and the wrasses nibble barnacles off the rocks, shells and all, when he saw a round cage of green withes; and inside it, looking very much ashamed of himself, sat his friend the lobster, twiddling his horns, instead of thumbs.

"What, have you been naughty, and have they put you in the lockup?" asked Tom.

The lobster felt a little indignant at such a notion, but he was too much depressed in spirits to argue; so he only said, "I can't get out."

"Why did you get in?"

"After that nasty piece of dead fish." He had thought it looked and smelt very nice when he was outside, and so it did, for a lobster; but now he turned round and abused it because he was angry with himself.

"Where did you get in?"

"Through that round hole at the top."

"Then why don't you get out through it?"

"Because I can't;" and the lobster twiddled his horns more fiercely than ever, but he was forced to confess.

"I have jumped upwards, downwards, backwards, and sideways, at least four thousand

times; and I can't get out. I always get up underneath there, and can't find the hole."

Tom looked at the trap, and having more wit than the lobster, he saw plainly enough what was the matter; as you may if you will look at a lobster-pot.[22]

"Stop a bit," said Tom. "Turn your tail up to me, and I'll pull you through hindforemost, and then you won't stick in the spikes."

But the lobster was so stupid and clumsy that he couldn't hit the hole. Like a great many fox hunters, he was very sharp as long as he was in his own country; but as soon as they get out of it they lose their heads; and so the lobster, so to speak, lost his tail.

Tom reached and clawed down the hole after him, till he caught hold of him; and then, as was to be expected, the clumsy lobster pulled him in head foremost.

"Hullo! here is a pretty business," said Tom. "Now take your great claws, and break the points off those spikes, and then we shall both get out easily."

"Dear me, I never thought of that," said the lobster; "and after all the experience of life that I have had!"

You see, experience is of very little good unless a man, or a lobster, has wit enough to make use of it. For a good many people have

22. You will understand from the lobster's description of his attempt to get out of the "cage of green withes" in which he found himself, that the lobster-pot had hooks or spikes which were bent in toward the center, so that the opening in the top was but small.

seen all the world, and yet remain little better than children after all.

But they had not got half the spikes away when they saw a great dark cloud over them; and lo and behold, it was the otter.

How she did grin and grin when she saw Tom. "Yar!" said she, "you little meddlesome wretch, I have you now! I will serve you out for telling the salmon where I was!" And she crawled all over the pot to get in.

Tom was horribly frightened, and still more frightened when she found the hole in the top, and squeezed herself right down through it, all eyes and teeth. But no sooner was her head inside than valiant Mr. Lobster caught her by the nose and held on.

And there they were all three in the pot, rolling over and over, and very tight packing it was. And the lobster tore at the otter, and the otter tore at the lobster, and both squeezed and thumped poor Tom till he had no breath left in his body; and I don't know what would have happened to him if he had not at last got on the otter's back, and safe out of the hole.

He was right glad when he got out, but he would not desert his friend who had saved him; and the first time he saw his tail uppermost he caught hold of it, and pulled with all his might.

But the lobster would not let go.

"Come along," said Tom; "don't you see she is dead?" And so she was, quite drowned and dead.

And that was the end of the wicked otter.

But the lobster would not let go.

"Come along, you stupid old stick-in-the-mud," cried Tom, "or the fisherman will catch you!" And that was true, for Tom felt some one above beginning to haul up the pot.

But the lobster would not let go.

Tom saw the fisherman haul him up to the boat side, and thought it was all up with him. But when Mr. Lobster saw the fisherman, he gave such a furious and tremendous snap, that he snapped out of his hand, and out of the pot, and safe into the sea. But he left his knobbed claw behind him; for it never came into his stupid head to let go after all, so he just shook his claw off as the easier method.

Tom asked the lobster why he never thought of letting go. He said very determinedly that it was a point of honour among lobsters.

And now happened to Tom a most wonderful thing; for he had not left the lobster five minutes before he came upon a water baby.

A real, live water baby, sitting on the white sand, very busy about a little point of rock. And when it saw Tom it looked up for a moment and then cried, "Why, you are not one of us. You are a new baby! Oh, how delightful!"

And it ran to Tom, and Tom ran to it, and they hugged and kissed each other for ever so long, they did not know why. But they did not want any introductions there under the water.

At last Tom said, "Oh, where have you been all this while? I have been looking for you so long, and I have been so lonely."

"We have been here for days and days. There are hundreds of us about the rocks. How was it you did not see us, or hear us when we sing and romp every evening before we go home?"

Tom looked at the baby again, and then he said:

"Well, this is wonderful! I have seen things just like you again and again, but I thought you were shells, or sea creatures. I never took you for water babies like myself."

Now, was not that very odd? So odd, indeed, that you will, no doubt, want to know how it happened, and why Tom could never find a water baby till after he had got the lobster out of the pot. And, if you will read this story nine times over, and then think for yourself, you will find out why. It is not good for little boys to be told everything, and never to be forced to use their own wits.

"Now," said the baby, "come and help me, or I shall not have finished before my brothers and sisters come, and it is time to go home."

"What shall I help you at?"

"At this poor, dear little rock; a great clumsy boulder came rolling by in the last storm, and knocked all its head off, and rubbed off all its flowers. And now I must plant it again with seaweeds, and coraline, and anemones, and I will make it the prettiest little rock-garden on all the shore."

So they worked away at the rock, and planted it, and smoothed the sand down round it, and

capital fun they had till the tide began to turn. And then Tom heard all the other babies coming, laughing and singing and shouting and romping; and the noise they made was just like the noise of the ripple. So he knew that he had been hearing and seeing the water babies all along; only he did not know them, because his eyes and ears were not opened.

And in they came, dozens and dozens of them, some bigger than Tom and some smaller, all in the neatest little white bathing dresses; and when they found that he was a new baby, they hugged and kissed him, and then put him in the middle and danced around him on the sand, and there was no one ever so happy as poor little Tom.

"Now then," they cried all at once, "we must come away home, we must come away home, or the tide will leave us dry. We have mended all the broken seaweed, and put all the rock-pools in order, and planted all the shells again in the sand, and nobody will see where the ugly storm swept last week."

And this is the reason why the rock-pools are always so neat and clean; because the water babies come inshore after every storm to sweep them out, and comb them down, and put them all to rights again.

Only where men are wasteful and dirty, and let sewers run into the sea instead of putting the stuff upon the fields like thrifty, reasonable souls; or throw herrings' heads and dead dog-fish, or any other refuse, into the water; or in

any way make a mess upon the clean shore—there the water babies will not come, sometimes not for hundreds of years (for they cannot abide anything smelly or foul), but leave the sea anemones and the crabs to clear away everything till the good, tidy sea has covered up all the dirt in soft mud and clean sand, where the water babies can plant live cockles and whelks and razor shells and sea cucumbers and golden combs, and make a pretty live garden again, after man's dirt is cleared away. And that, I suppose, is the reason why there are no water babies at any watering place which I have ever seen.

Now when Tom got to the home of the water babies, in Saint Brandan's fairy isle, he found that the isle stood all on pillars, and that its roots were full of caves. There were pillars of black basalt and pillars of green and crimson serpentine; and pillars ribboned with red and white and yellow sandstone; and there were blue grottoes and white grottoes, all curtained and draped with seaweeds, purple and crimson, green and brown; and strewn with soft white sand, on which the water babies sleep every night. But, to keep the place clean and sweet, the crabs picked up all the scraps off the floor and ate them like so many monkeys; while the rocks were covered with ten thousand sea anemones, and corals and madrepores, who scavenged the water all day long, and kept it nice and pure. But, to make up to them for having to do such nasty work, they were not left black and dirty, as poor

chimney-sweeps and dustmen are. No; the fairies are more considerate and just than that, and have dressed them all in the most beautiful colours and patterns, till they look like vast flower beds of gay blossoms.

And, instead of watchmen and policemen to keep out nasty things at night, there were thousands and thousands of water snakes, and most wonderful creatures they were.

They were dressed in green velvet, and black velvet, and purple velvet; and were all jointed in rings; and some of them had three hundred brains apiece, so that they must have been uncommonly shrewd detectives; and some had eyes in their tails; and some had eyes in every joint, so that they kept a very sharp lookout; and when they wanted a baby snake, they just grew one at the end of their own tails, and when it was able to take care of itself it dropped off; so that they brought up their families very cheaply. But if any nasty thing came by, out they rushed upon it; and then out of each of their hundreds of feet there sprang a whole cutler's shop of

Scythes,
Billhooks,
Pickaxes,
Forks,
Penknives,
Rapiers,
Sabres,
Yataghans,
Creeses,
Ghoorka swords,
Tucks,
Javelins,
Lances,
Halberts,
Gisarines,
Poleaxes,

Fishhooks, *Corkscrews,*
Bradawls, *Pins,*
Gimlets, *Needles,*
And so forth,

which stabbed, shot, poked, pricked, scratched, ripped, pinked, and crimped those naughty beasts so terribly that they had to run for their lives, or else be chopped into small pieces and be eaten afterwards.

And there were the water babies in thousands, more than Tom, or you either, could count. All the little children whom the good fairies take to, because their cruel mothers and fathers will not; all who are untaught and brought up heathens, and all who come to grief by ill usage or ignorance or neglect; all the little children in alleys and courts, and tumble-down cottages, who die by fever, and cholera, and measles, and scarlatina, and nasty complaints which no one has any business to have, and which no one will have some day, when folks have common sense; and all the little children who have been killed by cruel masters and wicked soldiers; they were all there, except, of course, the babes of Bethlehem who were killed by wicked King Herod; for they were taken straight to heaven long ago, as everybody knows, and we call them the Holy Innocents.

But I wish Tom had given up all his naughty tricks, and left off tormenting dumb animals now that he had plenty of playfellows to amuse him. Instead of that, I am sorry to say, he

would meddle with the creatures, all but the water snakes, for they would stand no nonsense. So he tickled the madrepores, to make them shut up; and frightened the crabs, to make them hide in the sand and peep out at him with the tips of their eyes; and put stones into the anemones'[23] mouths, to make them fancy that their dinner was coming.

The other children warned him, and said, "Take care what you are at. Mrs. Bedonebyasyoudid is coming." But Tom never heeded them, being quite riotous with high spirits and good luck, till, one Friday morning early, Mrs. Bedonebyasyoudid came indeed.

A very tremendous lady she was; and when the children saw her they all stood in a row, very upright indeed, and smoothed down their bathing dresses, and put their hands behind them, just as if they were going to be examined by the inspector.

And she had on a black bonnet, and a black shawl, and no crinoline at all, and a pair of large green spectacles, and a great hooked nose, hooked so much that the bridge of it stood quite up above her eyebrows; and under her arm she carried a great birch-rod. Indeed she was so ugly that Tom was tempted to make faces at her, but did not, for he did not admire the look of the birch-rod under her arm.

23. The anemones spoken of here are not to be confused with the flowers which grow on land. The sea anemones are alive, but the circles of tentacles about their mouths make them look like flowers of the most beautiful colors. They have no eyes, and of course could not see what Tom was offering them.

MRS. BEDONEBYASYOUDID

And she looked at the children one by one, and seemed very much pleased with them, though she never asked them one question about how they were behaving; and then began giving them all sorts of nice sea things—sea cakes, sea apples, sea oranges, sea bullseyes, sea toffee;

and to the very best of all she gave sea ices, made out of sea-cows' cream, which never melt under water.

Now little Tom watched all these sweet things given away, till his mouth watered, and his eyes grew as round as an owl's. For he hoped that his turn would come at last; and so it did. For the lady called him up, and held out her fingers with something in them, and popped it into his mouth; and lo and behold, it was a nasty, cold, hard pebble.

"You are a very cruel woman," said he, and began to whimper.

"And you are a very cruel boy, who puts pebbles into the sea-anemones' mouths, to take them in, and make them fancy that they have caught a good dinner. As you did to them, so must I do to you."

"Who told you that?" said Tom.

"You did yourself, this very minute."

Tom had never opened his lips; so he was very much taken aback indeed.

"Yes; every one tells me exactly what they have done wrong; and that without knowing it themselves. So there is no use trying to hide anything from me. Now go, and be a good boy, and I will put no more pebbles in your mouth, if you put none in other creatures'."

"I did not know there was any harm in it," said Tom.

"Then you know now. People continually say that to me; but I tell them, if they don't know that fire burns, that is no reason that it

should not burn you; and if you don't know that dirt breeds fever, that is no reason why the fevers should not kill you. The lobster did not know that there was any harm in getting into the lobster-pot; but it caught him all the same."

"Dear me," thought Tom, "she knows everything!" And so she did, indeed.

"And so, if you do not know that things are wrong, that is no reason why you should not be punished for them; though not as much, not as much, my little man" (and the lady looked very kindly, after all), "as if you did know."

"Well, you are a little hard on a poor lad," said Tom.

"Not at all; I am the best friend you ever had in all your life. But I will tell you: I cannot help punishing people when they do wrong. I like it no more than they do; I am often very, very sorry for them, poor things; but I cannot help it. If I tried not to do it, I should do it all the same. For I work by machinery, just like an engine; and am full of wheels and springs inside; and am wound up very carefully, so that I cannot help going."

"Was it long ago since they wound you up?" asked Tom. For he thought, the cunning little fellow, "She will run down some day; or they may forget to wind her up, as old Grimes used to forget to wind up his watch when he came in from the public-house; and then I shall be safe."

"I was wound up once and for all, so long ago that I forgot all about it."

"Dear me," said Tom, "you must have been made a long time!"

"I never was made, my child; and I shall go for ever and ever; for I am as old as Eternity, and yet as young as Time."

And there came over the lady's face a very curious expression—very solemn, and very sad; and yet very, very sweet. And she looked up and away, as if she were gazing through the sea, and through the sky, at something far, far off; and as she did so, there came such a quiet, tender, patient, hopeful smile over her face that Tom thought for the moment that she did not look ugly at all. And no more she did; for she was like a great many people who have not a pretty feature in their faces, and yet are lovely to behold, and draw little children's hearts to them at once; because though the house is plain enough, yet from the windows a beautiful and good spirit is looking forth.

And Tom smiled in her face, she looked so pleasant for the moment. And the strange fairy smiled too, and said:

"Yes. You thought me very ugly just now, did you not?"

Tom hung down his head, and got very red about the ears.

"And I am very ugly. I am the ugliest fairy in the world; and I shall be, till people behave themselves as they ought to do. And then I shall grow as handsome as my sister, who is the loveliest fairy in the world; and her name is Mrs. Doasyouwouldbedoneby. So she begins where

I end, and I begin where she ends; and those who will not listen to her must listen to me, as you will see. Now, all of you run away, except Tom; and he may stay and see what I am going to do. It will be a very good warning for him to begin with, before he goes to school.

"Now, Tom, every Friday I come down here and call up all who have ill-used little children, and serve them as they served the children."

And first she called up all the doctors who give little children so much physic (they were most of them old ones; for the young ones have learnt better), and she set them all in a row; and very rueful they looked; for they knew what was coming.

And first she pulled all their teeth out; and then she bled them all round; and then she dosed them with calomel, and jalap, and salts and senna, and brimstone and treacle; and horrible faces they made; and then she gave them a great emetic of mustard and water, and began all over again; and that was the way she spent the morning.

And then she called up a whole troop of foolish ladies, who pinch up their children's waists and toes; and she laced them all up in tight stays, so that they were choked and sick, and their noses grew red, and their hands and feet swelled; and then she crammed their poor feet into the most dreadfully tight boots, and made them all dance, which they did most clumsily indeed; and then she asked them how they liked it; and when they said not at all, she let them go; because

they had only done it out of foolish fashion, fancying it was for their children's good, as if wasps' waists and pigs' toes could be pretty, or wholesome, or of any use to anybody.

Then she called up all the careless nursery-maids, and stuck pins into them all over, and wheeled them about in perambulators with tight straps across their stomachs and their heads and arms hanging over the side, till they were quite sick and stupid, and would have had sun-strokes; but, being under the water, they could only have water-strokes; which, I assure you, are nearly as bad, as you will find if you try to sit under a mill wheel. And mind—when you hear a rumbling at the bottom of the sea, sailors will tell you that it is a ground swell; but now you know better. It is the old lady wheeling the maids about in perambulators.

And by this time she was so tired, she had to go to luncheon.

And after luncheon she set to work again, and called up all the cruel schoolmasters—whole regiments and brigades of them; and when she saw them, she frowned most terribly, and set to work in earnest, as if the best part of the day's work was to come. And she boxed their ears, and thumped them over the head with rulers, and pandied their hands with canes, and told them that they told stories, and were this and that bad sort of people; and the more they were very indignant, and stood upon their honour, and declared they told the truth, the more she declared they were not, and that they were only

telling lies; and at last she birched them all round soundly with her great birch-rod and set them each an imposition of three hundred thousand lines of Hebrew to learn by heart before she came back next Friday. And at that they all cried and howled so, that their breaths came all up through the sea like bubbles out of soda water; and that is one reason of the bubbles in the sea. There are others; but that is the one which principally concerns little boys. And by that time she was so tired that she was glad to stop; and, indeed, she had done a very good day's work.

Tom did not quite dislike the old lady; but he could not help thinking her a little spiteful—and no wonder if she was, poor old soul; for if she has to wait to grow handsome till people do as they would be done by, she will have to wait a very long time.

Poor old Mrs. Bedonebyasyoudid! she has a great deal of hard work before her, and had better have been born a washerwoman, and stood over a tub all day; but, you see, people cannot always choose their own profession.

But Tom longed to ask her one question; and, after all, whenever she looked at him, she did not look cross at all; and now and then there was a funny smile in her face, and she chuckled to herself in a way which gave Tom courage, and at last he said:

"Pray, ma'am, may I ask you a question?"

"Certainly, my little dear."

"Why don't you bring all the bad masters

here and serve them out, too? The butties[24] that knock about the poor collier-boys; and the nailers that file off their lads' noses and hammer their fingers; and all the master sweeps, like my master Grimes? I saw him fall into the water long ago; so I surely expected he would have been here. I'm sure he was bad enough to me."

Then the old lady looked so very stern that Tom was quite frightened, and sorry that he had been so bold. But she was not angry with him. She only answered, "I look after them all the week round; and they are in a very different place from this, because they knew that they were doing wrong."

She spoke very quietly; but there was something in her voice which made Tom tingle from head to foot, as if he had got into a shoal of sea nettles.

"But these people," she went on, "did not know that they were doing wrong; they were only stupid and impatient; and therefore I only punish them till they become patient, and learn to use their common sense like reasonable beings. But as for chimney-sweeps, and collier-boys, and nailer lads, my sister has set good people to stop all that sort of thing; and very much obliged to her I am; for if she could only stop the cruel masters from ill-using poor children, I should grow handsome at least a thousand

24. *Butty*, in the English coal-mining regions, is the name given to a man who takes a contract to work out a certain area of coal. He employs other people to work for him. A *nailer* is a man who makes nails.

years sooner. And now do you be a good boy, and do as you would be done by, which they did not; and then, when my sister, Madame Doasyouwouldbedoneby, comes on Sunday, perhaps she will take notice of you, and teach you how to behave. She understands that better than I do." And so she went.

Tom was very glad to hear that there was no chance of meeting Grimes again, though he was a little sorry for him, considering that he used sometimes to give him the leavings of the beer; but he determined to be a very good boy all Saturday; and he was; for he never frightened one crab, nor tickled any live corals, nor put stones into the sea-anemones' mouths, to make them fancy they had got a dinner; and when Sunday morning came, sure enough, Mrs. Doasyouwouldbedoneby came too. Whereat all the little children began dancing and clapping their hands, and Tom danced too with all his might.

And as for the pretty lady, I cannot tell you what the colour of her hair was, or of her eyes; no more could Tom; for when people look at her, all they can think of is, that she has the sweetest, kindest, tenderest, funniest, merriest face they ever saw, or want to see. But Tom saw that she was a very tall woman, as tall as her sister; but instead of being gnarly, and horny, and scaly, and prickly, like her, she was the most nice, soft, fat, smooth, pussy, cuddly, delicious creature who ever nursed a baby; and she understood babies thoroughly, for she had

plenty of her own, whole rows and regiments of them, and has to this day. And all her delight was, whenever she had a spare moment, to play with babies, in which she showed herself a woman of sense; for babies are the best company and the pleasantest playfellows in the world; at least, so all the wise people in the world think. And therefore when the children saw her, they naturally caught hold of her, and pulled her till she sat down on a stone, and climbed into her lap, and clung round her neck, and caught hold of her hands; and then they all put their thumbs into their mouths, and began cuddling and purring like so many kittens, as they ought to have done. While those who could get nowhere else sat down on the sand, and cuddled her feet—for no one, you know, wears shoes in the water, except horrid old bathing-women, who are afraid of the water babies pinching their horny toes. And Tom stood staring at them; for he could not understand what it was all about.

"And who are you, you little darling?" she said.

"Oh, that is the new baby!" they all cried, pulling their thumbs out of their mouths, "and he never had any mother;" and they all put their thumbs back again, for they did not wish to lose any time.

"Then I will be his mother, and he shall have the very best place; so get out, all of you, this moment."

And she took up two great armfuls of babies—

nine hundred under one arm and thirteen hundred under the other—and threw them away, right and left, into the water. But they did not even take their thumbs out of their mouths, but came paddling and wriggling back to her like so many tadpoles, till you could see nothing of her from head to foot for the swarm of little babies.

SHE TOOK TOM IN HER ARMS

But she took Tom in her arms, and laid him in the softest place of all, and kissed him, and patted him, and talked to him, tenderly and low, such things as he had never heard before in his life; and Tom looked up into her eyes, and loved her, and loved, till he fell fast asleep from pure love.

And when he woke she was telling the children a story. And what story did she tell them? One story she told them, which begins every

Christmas Eve, and yet never ends at all, for ever and ever; and as she went on, the children took their thumbs out of their mouths and listened quite seriously, but not sadly at all; for she never told them anything sad; and Tom listened too, and never grew tired of listening. And he listened so long that he fell fast asleep again, and when he woke, the lady was nursing him still.

"Now," said the fairy to Tom, "will you be a good boy for my sake, and torment no more sea beasts till I come back?"

"And you will cuddle me again?" said poor little Tom.

"Of course I will, you little duck. I should like to take you with me and cuddle you all the way, only I must not;" and away she went.

So Tom really tried to be a good boy, and tormented no sea beasts after that as long as he lived; and he is quite alive, I assure you, still.

CHAPTER VI

ERE I come to the very saddest part of all my story.

Now you may fancy that Tom was quite good, when he had everything that he could want or wish; but you would be very much mistaken. Being quite comfortable is a very good thing; but it does not make people good. Indeed, it sometimes makes them naughty, and I am very sorry to say that this

happened to little Tom. For he grew so fond of the sea bullseyes and sea lollipops that his foolish little head could think of nothing else; and he was always longing for more, and wondering when the strange lady would come again and give him some, and what she would give him, and how much, and whether she would give him more than the others. And he thought of nothing but lollipops by day, and dreamt of nothing else by night—and what happened then?

That he began to watch the lady to see where she kept the sweet things; and began hiding, and sneaking, and following her about, and pretending to be looking the other way, or going after something else, till he found out that she kept them in a beautiful mother-of-pearl cabinet away in a deep crack of the rocks.

And he longed to go to the cabinet, and yet he was afraid; and then he longed again, and was less afraid; and at last, by continual thinking about it, he longed so violently that he was not afraid at all. And one night, when all the other children were asleep, and he could not sleep for thinking of lollipops, he crept away among the rocks, and got to the cabinet, and behold! it was open.

But when he saw all the nice things inside, instead of being delighted, he was quite frightened, and wished he had never come there. And then he would only touch them, and he did; and then he would only taste one, and he did; and then he would only eat one, and he did; and then he would only eat two, and then three, and so on;

and then he was terrified lest she should come and catch him, and began gobbling them down so fast that he did not taste them, or have any pleasure in them; and then he felt sick, and would have only one more; and then only one more again; and so on till he had eaten them all up.

And all the while, close behind him, stood Mrs. Bedonebyasyoudid.

Some people may say, "But why did she not keep her cupboard locked?" Well, I know. It may seem a very strange thing, but she never does keep her cupboard locked; every one may go and taste for himself, and fare accordingly. It is very odd, but so it is; and I am quite sure that she knows best. Perhaps she wishes people to learn to keep their fingers out of the fire by having them burned.

She took off her spectacles, because she did not like to see too much; and in her pity she arched up her eyebrows into her very hair, and her eyes grew so wide that they would have taken in all the sorrows of the world, and filled with great big tears, as they too often do.

But all she said was:

"Ah, you poor little dear! you are just like all the rest."

But she said it to herself, and Tom neither heard nor saw her. Now, you must not fancy that she was sentimental at all. If you do, and think that she is going to let off you, or me, or any human being when we do wrong, because she is too tender-hearted to punish us, then you

THE CABINET WAS OPEN!

will find yourself very much mistaken, as many a man does every year and every day.

But what did the strange fairy do when she saw all her lollipops eaten?

Did she fly at Tom, catch him by the scruff of the neck, hold him, hit him, poke him, pull him, pinch him, pound him, put him in the corner, shake him, slap him, set him on a cold stone to reconsider himself, and so forth?

Not a bit. You may watch her at work if you know where to find her. But you will never see her do that. For, if she had, she knew quite well Tom would have fought and kicked, and bit, and said bad words, and turned again that moment into a naughty little heathen chimney-sweep, with his hand, like Ishmael's of old, against every man, and every man's hand against him.

Did she question him, hurry him, frighten him, threaten him, to make him confess? Not a bit. You may see her, as I said, at her work often enough if you know where to look for her; but you will never see her do that. For if she had, she would have tempted him to tell lies in his fright; and that would have been worse for him, if possible, than even becoming a heathen chimney-sweep again.

No. She leaves that for anxious parents and teachers (lazy ones, some call them), who, instead of giving children a fair trial, such as they would expect and demand for themselves, force them by fright to confess their own faults—which is so cruel and unfair that no judge on the bench

dare do it to the wickedest thief or murderer, for the good British law forbids it—ay, and even punish them to make them confess, which is so detestable a crime that it is never committed now.

So the fairy just said nothing at all about the matter, not even when Tom came next day with the rest for sweet things. He was horribly afraid of coming, but he was still more afraid of staying away, lest any one should suspect him. He was dreadfully afraid, too, lest there should be no sweets—as was to be expected, he having eaten them all—and lest then the fairy should inquire who had taken them. But behold! she pulled out just as many as ever, which astonished Tom, and frightened him still more.

And when the fairy looked him full in the face, he shook from head to foot; however she gave him his share like the rest, and he thought within himself that she could not have found him out.

But when he put the sweets into his mouth, he hated the taste of them; and they made him so sick that he had to get away as fast as he could; and terribly sick he was, and very cross and unhappy, all the week after.

Then, when next week came, he had his share again; and again the fairy looked him full in the face; but more sadly than she had ever looked. And he could not bear the sweets; but took them again in spite of himself.

And when Mrs. Doasyouwouldbedoneby came, he wanted to be cuddled like the rest; but she said very seriously:

"I should like to cuddle you, but I cannot; you are so horny and prickly."

And Tom looked at himself; and he was all over prickles, just like a sea egg.

Which was quite natural; for you must know and believe that people's souls make their bodies just as a snail makes its shell (I am not joking, my little man; I am in serious, solemn earnest). And therefore, when Tom's soul grew all prickly with naughty tempers, his body could not help growing prickly too, so that nobody would cuddle him, or play with him, or even like to look at him.

What could Tom do now but go away and hide in a corner and cry? For nobody would play with him, and he knew full well why.

And he was so miserable all that week that when the ugly fairy came and looked at him once more full in the face, more seriously and sadly than ever, he could stand it no longer, and thrust the sweetmeats away, saying, "No, I don't want any: I can't bear them now;" and then burst out crying, poor little man, and told Mrs. Bedonebyasyoudid every word as it happened.

He was horribly frightened when he had done so; for he expected her to punish him very severely. But instead, she only took him up and kissed him, which was not quite pleasant, for her chin was very bristly indeed; but he was so lonely-hearted, he thought that rough kissing was better than none.

"I will forgive you, little man," she said. "I

always forgive people the moment they tell me the truth of their own accord."

"Then you will take away all these nasty prickles?"

"That is a very different matter. You put them there yourself, and only you can take them away."

"But how can I do that?" asked Tom, crying afresh.

"Well, I think it is time for you to go to school; so I shall fetch you a schoolmistress, who will teach you how to get rid of your prickles." And so she went away.

Tom was frightened at the notion of a schoolmistress; for he thought she would certainly come with a birch-rod or a cane; but he comforted himself, at last, that she might be something like the old woman in Vendale—which she was not in the least; for when the fairy brought her, she was the most beautiful little girl that ever was seen, with long curls floating behind her like a golden cloud, and long robes floating all round her like a silver one.

"There he is," said the fairy; "and you must teach him to be good, whether you like or not."

"I know," said the little girl; but she did not seem quite to like, for she put her finger in her mouth, and looked at Tom under her brows; and Tom put his finger in his mouth, and looked at her under his brows, for he was horribly ashamed of himself.

The little girl seemed hardly to know how to begin; and perhaps she would never have begun

at all if poor Tom had not burst out crying, and begged her to teach him to be good and help him to cure his prickles; and at that she grew so tender-hearted that she began teaching him as prettily as ever child was taught in the world.

And what did the little girl teach Tom? She taught him, first, what you have been taught ever since you said your first prayers at your mother's knees; but she taught him much more simply. For the lessons in that world, my child, have no such hard words in them as the lessons in this, and therefore the water babies like them better than you like your lessons, and long to learn them more and more; and grown men cannot puzzle nor quarrel over their meaning, as they do here on land; for those lessons all rise clear and pure, out of the everlasting ground of all life and truth.

So she taught Tom every day in the week; only on Sundays she always went away home, and the kind fairy took her place. And before she had taught Tom many Sundays, his prickles had vanished quite away, and his skin was smooth and clean again.

"Dear me!" said the little girl; "why, I know you now. You are the very same little chimney-sweep who came into my bedroom."

"Dear me!" cried Tom. "And I know you, too, now. You are the very little white lady whom I saw in bed." And he jumped at her, and longed to hug and kiss her; but did not, remembering that she was a lady born; so he only jumped round and round her till he was quite tired.

And then they began telling each other all their story—how he had got into the water, and she had fallen over the rock; and how he had swum down to the sea, and how she had flown out of the window; and how this, that, and the other, till it was all talked out. And then they both began over again, and I can't say which of the two talked fastest.

And then they set to work at their lessons again, and both liked them so well that they went on well till seven full years were past and gone.

You may fancy that Tom was quite content and happy all those seven years; but the truth is, he was not. He had always one thing on his mind, and that was—where little Ellie went, when she went home on Sundays.

To a very beautiful place, she said.

But what was the beautiful place like, and where was it?

Ah! that is just what she could not say. And it is strange, but true, that no one can say; and that those who have been oftenest in it, or even nearest to it, can say least about it, and make people understand least what it is like.

But the dear, sweet, loving, wise, good, self-sacrificing people, who really go there, can never tell you anything about it, save that it is the most beautiful place in all the world; and if you ask them more, they grow modest, and hold their peace, for fear of being laughed at; and quite right they are.

So all that good little Ellie could say was, that

it was worth all the rest of the world put together. And of course that only made Tom the more anxious to go likewise.

"Miss Ellie," he said at last, "I will know why I cannot go with you when you go home on Sundays, or I shall have no peace, and give you none either."

"You must ask the fairies that."

So when the fairy, Mrs. Bedoneby as you did, came next, Tom asked her.

"Little boys who are only fit to play with sea beasts cannot go there," she said. "*Those who go there must go first where they do not like, and do what they do not like, and help somebody they do not like.*"

"Why, did Ellie do that?"

"Ask her."

And Ellie blushed, and said, "Yes, Tom, I did not like coming here at first; I was so much happier at home, where it is always Sunday. And I was afraid of you, Tom, at first, because —because——"

"Because I was all over prickles? But I am not prickly now, am I, Miss Ellie?"

"No," said Ellie. "I like you very much now; and I like coming here, too."

"And perhaps," said the fairy, "you will learn to like going where you don't like, and helping some one that you don't like, as Ellie has."

But Tom put his finger in his mouth, and hung his head down; for he did not see that at all.

So when Mrs. Doasyouwouldbedoneby came, Tom asked her; for he thought in his little head, "She is not so strict as her sister, and perhaps she may let me off more easily."

Ah, Tom, Tom, silly fellow! and yet I don't know why I should blame you, while so many grown people have got the very same notion in their heads.

But when they try it, they get just the same answer as Tom did. For when he asked the second fairy, she told him just what the first did, and in the very same words.

Tom was very unhappy at that. And when Ellie went home on Sunday, he fretted and cried all day, and did not care to listen to the fairy's stories about good children, though they were prettier than ever. Indeed, the more he overheard of them, the less he liked to listen, because they were all about children who did what they did not like, and took trouble for other people, and worked to feed their little brothers and sisters instead of caring only for their play. And when she began to tell a story about a holy child in old times, who was martyred by the heathen because it would not worship idols, Tom could bear no more, and ran away and hid among the rocks.

And when Ellie came back, he was shy with her, because he fancied she looked down on him, and thought him a coward. And then he grew quite cross with her, because she was superior to him, and did what he could not do. And poor Ellie was quite surprised and sad; and at

last Tom burst out crying; but he would not tell her what was really in his mind.

And all the while he was eaten up with curiosity to know where Ellie went to; so that he began not to care for his playmates, or for the sea palace or anything else. But perhaps that made matters all the easier for him; for he grew so discontented with everything round him that he did not care to stay, and did not care where he went.

"Well," he said, at last, "I am so miserable here, I'll go, if only you will go with me."

"Ah!" said Ellie, "I wish I might; but the worst of it is, that the fairy says that you must go alone if you go at all. Now don't poke that poor crab about, Tom" (for he was feeling very naughty and mischievous), "or the fairy will have to punish you."

Tom was very near saying, "I don't care if she does;" but he stopped himself in time.

"I know what she wants me to do," he said, whining most dolefully. "She wants me to go after that horrid old Grimes. I don't like him, that's certain. And if I find him, he will turn me into a chimney-sweep again, I know. That's what I have been afraid of all along."

"No, he won't—I know as much as that. Nobody can turn water babies into sweeps, or hurt them at all, as long as they are good."

"Ah," said naughty Tom, "I see what you want; you are persuading me all along to go, because you are tired of me, and want to get rid of me."

Little Ellie opened her eyes very wide at that, and they were all brimming over with tears.

"Oh, Tom, Tom!" she said, very mournfully—and then she cried, "Oh, Tom, where are you?"

And Tom cried, "Oh, Ellie, where are you?"

For neither of them could see the other—not the least. Little Ellie vanished quite away, and Tom heard her voice calling him, and growing smaller and smaller, and fainter and fainter, till all was silent.

Who was frightened then but Tom? He swam up and down among the rocks, into all the halls and chambers, faster than ever he swam before, but could not find her. He shouted after her, but she did not answer; he asked all the other children, but they had not seen her; and at last he went up to the top of the water and began crying and screaming for Mrs. Bedoneby-asyoudid—which perhaps was the best thing to do, for she came in a moment.

"Oh!" said Tom. "Oh dear, oh dear! I have been naughty to Ellie, and I have killed her—I know I have killed her."

"Not quite that," said the fairy; "but I have sent her away home, and she will not come back again for I do not know how long."

And at that Tom cried bitterly.

"How cruel of you to send Ellie away!" sobbed Tom. "However, I will find her again, if I go to the world's end to look for her."

The fairy did not slap Tom, and tell him to hold his tongue; but she took him on her lap very kindly, just as her sister would have done;

and put him in mind how it was not her fault, because she was wound up inside, like watches, and could not help doing things whether she liked or not. And then she told him how he had been in the nursery long enough, and must go out now and see the world, if he intended ever to be a man; and how he must go all alone by himself, as every one else that ever was born has to go, and see with his own eyes, and smell with his own nose, and make his own bed and lie on it, and burn his own fingers if he put them into the fire. And then she told him how many fine things there were to be seen in the world, and what an odd, curious, pleasant, orderly, respectable, well-managed, and, on the whole, successful (as, indeed, might have been expected) sort of a place it was, if people would only be tolerably brave and honest and good in it; and then she told him not to be afraid of anything he met, for nothing would harm him if he remembered all his lessons, and did what he knew was right. And at last she comforted poor little Tom so much that he was quite eager to go, and wanted to set out that minute. "Only," he said, "if I might see Ellie once before I went!"

"Why do you want that?"

"Because—because I should be so much happier if I thought she had forgiven me."

And in the twinkling of an eye there stood Ellie, smiling, and looking so happy that Tom longed to kiss her; but was still afraid it would not be respectful, because she was a lady born.

"I am going, Ellie!" said Tom. "I am going, if it is to the world's end. But I don't like going at all, and that's the truth."

"Pooh! pooh! pooh!" said the fairy. "You will like it very well indeed, you little rogue, and you know that at the bottom of your heart. But if you don't I will make you like it. Come here, and see what happens to people who do only what is pleasant."

And she took out of one of her cupboards (she had all sorts of mysterious cupboards in the cracks of the rocks) the most wonderful waterproof book, full of such photographs as never were seen. For she had found out photography (and this is a fact) more than 13,598,000 years before anybody was born; and what is more, her photographs did not merely represent light and shade, as ours do, but colour also. And therefore her photographs were very curious and famous, and the children looked with great delight at the opening of the book.

And on the title-page was written, "The History of the great and famous nation of the Doasyoulikes, who came away from the country of Hardwork, because they wanted to play on the Jew's-harp all day long."

In the first picture they saw these Doasyoulikes living in the land of Readymade, at the foot of the Happy-go-lucky Mountains, where flapdoodle[25] grows wild; and if you want to know what that is, you must read *Peter Simple*.[26]

25. Flapdoodle is the food on which fools are supposed to be fed.
26. *Peter Simple* is a novel by Captain Marryat.

They were very fond of music, but it was too much trouble to learn the piano or the violin: and as for dancing, that would have been too great an exertion. So they sat on ant-hills all day long, and played on the Jew's-harp; and if the ants bit them, why they just got up and went to the next ant-hill, till they were bitten there likewise.

And they sat under the flapdoodle trees, and let the flapdoodle drop into their mouths: and under the vines, and squeezed the grape juice down their throats; and if any little pigs ran about ready roasted, crying, "Come and eat me," as was their fashion in that country, they waited till the pigs ran against their mouths, and then took a bite, and were content, just as so many oysters would have been.

They needed no weapons, for no enemies ever came near their land; and no tools, for everything was ready-made to their hand; and the stern old fairy Necessity never came near them to hunt them up, and make them use their wits, or die.

"Well, that is a jolly life," said Tom.

"You think so?" said the fairy. "Do you see that great peaked mountain there behind, with smoke coming out of its top?"

"Yes."

"And do you see all those ashes, and slag, and cinders lying about?"

"Yes."

"Then turn over the next five hundred years, and you will see what happens next."

And behold, the mountain had blown up like a barrel of gunpowder, and then boiled over like a kettle; whereby one third of the Doasyoulikes were blown into the air, and another third were smothered in ashes; so that there was only one third left.

And then she turned over the next five hundred years; and there were the remnant of the Doasyoulikes, doing as they liked, as before. They were too lazy to move away from the mountain; so they said, "If it has blown up once, that is all the more reason that it should not blow up again." And they were few in number; but they only said, "The more, the merrier, but the fewer, the better fare." However, that was not quite true; for all the flapdoodle trees were killed by the volcano, and they had eaten all the roast pigs, who, of course, could not be expected to have little ones. So they had to live very hard, on nuts and roots which they scratched out of the ground with sticks. Some of them talked of sowing corn, as their ancestors used to do, before they came into the land of Readymade; but they had forgotten how to make ploughs (they had forgotten even how to make Jew's-harps by this time), and had eaten all the seed corn which they brought out of the land of Hardwork years since; and of course it was too much trouble to go away and find more. So they lived miserably on roots and nuts, and all the weakly little children died.

"Why," said Tom, "they are growing no better than savages."

And the fairy turned over the next five hundred years. And there they were all living up in trees, and making nests to keep off the rain. And underneath the trees lions were prowling about.

"Why," said Ellie, "the lions seem to have eaten a good many of them, for there are very few left now."

"Yes," said the fairy; "you see, it was only the strongest and most active ones who could climb the trees, and so escape."

"But what great, hulking, broad-shouldered chaps they are," said Tom; "they are a rough lot as ever I saw."

"Yes, they are getting very strong now; for the ladies will not marry any but the very strongest and fiercest gentlemen, who can help them up the trees out of the lions' way."

And she turned over the next five hundred years. And in that they were fewer still, and stronger, and fiercer; but their feet had changed shape very oddly, for they laid hold of the branches with their great toes, as if they had been thumbs, just as a Hindoo tailor uses his toes to thread his needle.

The children were very much surprised, and asked the fairy whether that was her doing.

"Yes, and no," she said, smiling. "It was only those who could use their feet as well as their hands who could get a good living; or, indeed, get married; so that they got the best of everything, and starved out all the rest: and those who are left keep up a regular breed of toe-

thumb-men, as a breed of shorthorns, or skye terriers, or fancy pigeons is kept up."

"But there is a hairy one among them," said Ellie.

"Ah!" said the fairy, "that will be a great man in his time, and chief of all the tribe."

And when she turned over the next five hundred years, it was true.

For this hairy chief had had hairy children, and they hairier children still; and every one wished to marry hairy husbands, and have hairy children too; for the climate was growing so damp that none but the hairy ones could live; all the rest coughed and sneezed, and had sore throats, and went into consumptions, before they could grow up to be men and women.

Then the fairy turned over the next five hundred years. And they were fewer still.

"Why, there is one on the ground picking up roots," said Ellie, "and he cannot walk upright."

No more he could; for in the same way that the shape of their feet had altered, the shape of their backs had altered also.

"Why," cried Tom, "I declare they are all apes."

"Something fearfully like it, poor foolish creatures," said the fairy. "They are grown so stupid now, that they can hardly think; for none of them have used their wits for many hundred years. They have almost forgotten, too, how to talk. For each stupid child forgot some of the words it heard from its stupid parents, and

had not wits enough to make fresh words for itself. Beside, they are grown so fierce and suspicious and brutal that they keep out of each other's way, and mope and sulk in the dark forests, never hearing each other's voice, till they have forgotten almost what speech is like. I am afraid they will all be apes very soon, and all by doing only what they liked."

And in the next five hundred years they were all dead and gone, by bad food and wild beasts and hunters; all except one tremendous old fellow with jaws like a jack, who stood full seven feet high; and M. Du Chaillu[27] came up to him, and shot him, as he stood roaring and thumping his breast. And he remembered that his ancestors had once been men, and tried to say, "Am I not a man and a brother?" but had forgotten how to use his tongue; and then he tried to call for a doctor, but he had forgotten the word for one. So all he said was "Ubboboo!" and died.

And that was the end of the great and jolly nation of the Doasyoulikes. And when Tom and Ellie came to the end of the book, they looked very sad and solemn; and they had good reason so to do, for they really fancied that the men were apes.

"But could you not have saved them from becoming apes?" said little Ellie, at last.

27. Paul du Chaillu, who was born in 1835, in New Orleans, Louisiana, made some very remarkable discoveries during his explorations in Africa —so wonderful, in fact, that people refused to believe them. He was the first man to observe the habits of gorillas, and to obtain specimens.

"At first, my dear, if only they would have behaved like men, and set to work to do what they did not like. But the longer they waited, and behaved like the dumb beasts, who only do what they like, the stupider and clumsier they grew; till at last they were past all cure, for they had thrown their own wits away. It is such things as this that help to make me so ugly, that I know not when I shall grow fair."

"And where are they all now?" asked Ellie.

"Exactly where they ought to be, my dear."

CHAPTER VII

OW," said Tom, "I am ready to be off, if it's to the world's end."

"Ah!" said the fairy, "that is a brave, good boy. But you must go farther than the world's end if you want to find Mr. Grimes; for he is at the Other-end-of-Nowhere. You must go to Shiny Wall, and through the white gate that never was opened; and then you will come to Peacepool, and Mother Carey's Haven, where the good whales go when they die. And there Mother Carey will tell you the way to the Other-end-of-Nowhere, and there you will find Mr. Grimes."

"Oh, dear!" said Tom. "But I do not know my way to Shiny Wall, or where it is at all."

"Little boys must take the trouble to find out things for themselves, or they will never grow to

be men; so that you must ask all the beasts in the sea and the birds in the air, and if you have been good to them, some of them will tell you the way to Shiny Wall."

"Well," said Tom, "it will be a long journey, so I had better start at once. Good-bye, Miss Ellie; you know I am getting a big boy, and I must go out and see the world."

"I know you must," said Ellie; "but you will not forget me, Tom. I shall wait here till you come."

And she shook hands with him, and bade him good-bye. Tom longed very much again to kiss her; but he thought it would not be respectful, considering she was a lady born. So he promised not to forget her; but his little whirl-about of a head was so full of the notion of going out to see the world, that it forgot her in five minutes; however, though his head forgot her, I am glad to say his heart did not.

So he asked all the beasts in the sea, and all the birds in the air, but none of them knew the way to Shiny Wall. For why? He was still too far down south. But for that there was a remedy.

And so he swam northward, day after day, till at last he met the King of the Herrings, with a currycomb growing out of his nose, and a sprat in his mouth for a cigar, and asked him the way to Shiny Wall; so he bolted the sprat head foremost, and said:

"If I were you, young gentleman, I should go to the Allalonestone, and ask the last of the

Gairfowl.[28] She is of a very ancient clan, very nearly as ancient as my own; and knows a good deal which these modern upstarts don't, as ladies of old houses are likely to do."

Tom asked his way to her, and the King of the Herrings told him very kindly, for he was a courteous old gentleman of the old school, though he was horribly ugly, and strangely bedizened too, like the old dandies who lounge in the clubhouse windows.

But just as Tom had thanked him and set off, he called after him, "Hi! I say, can you fly?"

"I never tried," said Tom. "Why?"

"Because, if you can, I should advise you to say nothing to the old lady about it. There; take a hint. Good-bye."

And away Tom went for seven days and seven nights due northwest, till he came to a great codbank, the like of which he never saw before.

And there he saw the last of the Gairfowl, standing up on the Allalonestone, all alone. And a very grand old lady she was, full three feet high, and bolt upright, like some old Highland chieftainess. She had on a black velvet gown, and a white pinner and apron, and a very high bridge to her nose (which is a sure mark of high breeding), and a large pair of white spectacles on it, which made her look rather

28. *Gairfowl*, or *garefowl*, was another name for the great auk. This bird was about thirty inches long, and its wings were so small in proportion to its body that it could not fly. There have been no great auks since about the middle of the nineteenth century.

THE LAST OF THE GAIRFOWL

odd;[29] but it was the ancient fashion of her house.

And instead of wings, she had two little feathery arms, with which she fanned herself, and complained of the dreadful heat.

Tom came up to her very humbly, and made his bow; and the first thing she said was:

"Have you wings? Can you fly?"

"Oh, dear, no, ma'am; I should not think of such a thing," said cunning little Tom.

"Then I shall have great pleasure in talking to you, my dear. It is quite refreshing nowadays to see anything without wings. They must all have wings, forsooth, now, every new upstart sort of bird, and fly. What can they want with flying, and raising themselves above their proper station in life? In the days of my ancestors no birds ever thought of having wings, and did very well without; and now they all laugh at me because I keep to the good old fashion."

And so she was running on, while Tom tried to get in a word edgeways; and at last he did, when the old lady got out of breath, and began fanning herself again. And then he asked if she knew the way to Shiny Wall.

"Shiny Wall? Who should know better than I? We all came from Shiny Wall, thousands of years ago, when it was decently cold, and the climate was fit for gentlefolk; but now, we have quite gone down in the world, my dear, and

29. The great auks were dark above and white beneath, and had huge white spots about their eyes.

have nothing left but our honour. And I am the last of my family. A friend of mine and I came and settled on this rock when we were young, to be out of the way of low people. Once we were a great nation, and spread over all the Northern Isles. But men shot us so, and knocked us on the head and took our eggs—why, if you will believe it, they say that on the coast of Labrador the sailors used to lay a plank from the rock on board the thing called their ship, and drive us along the plank by hundreds, till we tumbled down in the ship's waist in heaps, and then, I suppose, they ate us, the nasty fellows! Well—but—what was I saying? At last, there were none of us left, except on the old Gairfowlskerry, just off the Iceland coast, up which no man could climb. Even there we had no peace; for one day, when I was quite a young girl, the land rocked, and the sea boiled, and the sky grew dark, and all the air was filled with smoke and dust, and down tumbled the old Gairfowlskerry into the sea. The dovekies and marrocks,[30] of course, all flew away; but we were too proud to do that. Some of us were dashed to pieces, and the rest drowned, and so here I am left alone. And soon I shall be gone, my little dear, and nobody will miss me; and then the poor stone will be left all alone."

"But, please, which is the way to Shiny Wall?" said Tom.

"Oh, you must go, my little dear—you must

30. The dovekies and the marrocks, or marrots, are smaller birds belonging to the auk family.

go. Let me see—I am sure—that is—really, my poor old brains are getting quite puzzled. Do you know, my little dear, I am afraid, if you want to know, you must ask some of these vulgar birds about, for I have quite forgotten."

And the poor old Gairfowl began to cry tears of pure oil; and Tom was quite sorry for her, and for himself too, for he was at his wit's end whom to ask.

But there came by a flock of petrels, who are Mother Carey's own chickens; and Tom thought them much prettier than Lady Gairfowl, and so perhaps they were; for Mother Carey had had a great deal of fresh experience between the time that she invented the Gairfowl and the time that she invented them. They flitted along like a flock of black swallows, and hopped and skipped from wave to wave, lifting up their little feet behind them so daintily, and whistling to each other so tenderly, that Tom fell in love with them at once, and called to them to know the way to Shiny Wall.

"Shiny Wall? Do you want Shiny Wall? Then come with us, and we will show you. We are Mother Carey's own chickens, and she sends us out over all the seas, to show the good birds the way home."

Tom was delighted, and swam off to them, after he had made his bow to the Gairfowl. But she would not return his bow, but held herself bolt upright, and wept tears of oil.

Then the petrels asked this bird and that

whether they would take Tom to Shiny Wall; but one set was going to Sutherland, and one to the Shetlands, and one to Norway, and one to Spitzbergen, and one to Iceland, and one to Greenland; but none would go to Shiny Wall. So the good-natured petrels said that they would show him part of the way themselves, but they were only going as far as Jan Mayen's Land; and after that he must shift for himself.

On the way, in a wrecked ship Tom found a little black and tan terrier dog, which began barking and snapping at him, and would not let him come near.

Tom knew the dog's teeth could not hurt him; but at least it could shove him away, and did; and he and the dog fought and struggled, and he did not want to throw the dog overboard; but as they were struggling, there came a tall green sea, and walked in over the weather side of the ship, and swept them both into the waves.

And the poor little dog?

Why, after he had kicked and coughed a little, he sneezed so hard, that he sneezed himself clean out of his skin, and turned into a water dog, and jumped and danced round Tom, and ran over the crests of the waves, and snapped at the jellyfish and the mackerel, and followed Tom the whole way to the Other-end-of-Nowhere.

Then they went on again, till they began to see the peak of Jan Mayen's Land, standing up like a white sugar loaf, two miles above the clouds.

And there they fell in with a whole flock of

mollymocks,[31] who were feeding on a dead whale.

"These are the fellows to show you the way," said Mother Carey's chickens; "we cannot help you farther north. We don't like to get among the ice pack, for fear it should nip our toes; but the mollys dare fly anywhere."

So the petrels called to the mollys; but they

TOM AND THE PETRELS

were so busy and greedy, gobbling and packing and spluttering and fighting over the blubber, that they did not take the least notice.

"Come, come," said the petrels, "you lazy, greedy lubbers, this young gentleman is going to Mother Carey, and if you don't attend to him, you won't earn your discharge from her, you know."

31. The mollymocks, or mallemawks, are petrels, larger than the stormy petrels.

"Greedy we are," said a great, fat old molly, "but lazy we ain't; and as for lubbers, we're no more lubbers than you. Let's have a look at the lad."

And he flapped right into Tom's face, and stared at him in the most impudent way (for the mollys are audacious fellows, as all whalers know), and then asked him where he hailed from, and what land he sighted last.

And when Tom told him, he seemed pleased, and said he was a good plucked one to have got so far.

"Come along, lads," he said to the rest, "and give this little chap a cast over the pack, for Mother Carey's sake. We've eaten blubber enough for to-day, and we'll e'en work out a bit of our time by helping the lad."

So the mollys took Tom up on their backs, and flew off with him, laughing and joking—and oh, how they did smell of train oil!

And now they came to the edge of the pack, and beyond it they could see Shiny Wall looming, through mist, and snow, and storm. But the pack rolled horribly upon the swell, and the ice giants fought and roared, and leapt upon each other's backs, and ground each other to powder, so that Tom was afraid to venture among them, lest he should be ground to powder too.

But the good mollys took Tom and his dog up, and flew with them safe over the pack and the roaring ice giants, and set them down at the foot of Shiny Wall.

"And where is the gate?" asked Tom.

"There is no gate," said the mollys.

"No gate?" cried Tom, aghast.

"None; never a crack of one, and that's the whole of the secret, as better fellows, lad, than you have found to their cost; and if there had been, they'd have killed by now every right whale[32] that swims the sea."

"What am I to do, then?"

"Dive under the floe, to be sure, if you have pluck."

"I've not come so far to turn now," said Tom; "so here goes for a header."

"A lucky voyage to you, lad," said the mollys; "we knew you were one of the right sort. So good-bye."

"Why don't you come too?" asked Tom.

But the mollys only wailed sadly, "We can't go yet, we can't go yet," and flew away over the pack.

So Tom dived under the great white gate which never was opened yet, and went on in black darkness, at the bottom of the sea, for seven days and seven nights. And yet he was not a bit frightened. Why should he be? He was a brave English lad, whose business is to go out and see all the world.

And at last he saw the light, and clear, clear water overhead; and up he came a thousand fathoms, among clouds of sea moths, which fluttered round his head. There were moths

32. A right whale is a whale which yields much whalebone and much oil; it is so called because it is the "right" whale to take.

with pink heads and wings and opal bodies, that flapped about slowly; moths with brown wings that flapped about quickly; yellow shrimps that hopped and skipped most quickly of all; and jellies of all the colours in the world, that neither hopped nor skipped, but only dawdled and yawned, and would not get out of his way. The dog snapped at them till his jaws were tired; but Tom hardly minded them at all, he was so eager to get to the top of the water, and see the pool where the good whales go.

And a very large pool it was, miles and miles across, though the air was so clear that the ice cliffs on the opposite side looked as if they were close at hand. All round it the ice cliffs rose, in walls and spires and battlements, and caves and bridges, and stories and galleries, in which the ice fairies live, and drive away the storms and clouds, that Mother Carey's pool may lie calm from year's end to year's end. And the sun acted policeman, and walked round outside every day, peeping just over the top of the ice wall, to see that all went right; and now and then he played conjuring tricks, or had an exhibition of fireworks, to amuse the ice fairies. For he would make himself into four or five suns at once, or paint the sky with rings and crosses and crescents of white fire, and stick himself in the middle of them, and wink at the fairies; and I daresay they were very much amused, for anything's fun in the country.

And there the good whales lay, the happy, sleepy beasts, upon the still oily sea. They were

all right whales, you must know, and finners, and razorbacks, and bottle-noses, and spotted sea unicorns with long ivory horns. But the sperm whales are such raging, ramping, roaring, rumbustious fellows, that, if Mother Carey let them in, there would be no more peace in Peace-pool. So she packs them away in a great pond by themselves at the South Pole, two hundred and sixty-three miles south-southeast of Mount Erebus, the great volcano in the ice; and there they butt each other with their ugly noses, day and night from year's end to year's end.

Tom swam up to the nearest whale, and asked the way to Mother Carey.

"There she sits in the middle," said the whale.

Tom looked; but he could see nothing in the middle of the pool but one peaked iceberg, and he said so.

"That's Mother Carey," said the whale, "as you will find when you get to her. There she sits making old beasts into new all the year round."

"How does she do that?"

"That's her concern, not mine," said the old whale; and yawned so wide (for he was very large) that there swam into his mouth 943 sea moths, 13,846 jellyfish no bigger than pins' heads, a string of salpae nine yards long, and forty-three little ice crabs, who gave each other a parting pinch all round, tucked their legs under their stomachs, and determined to die decently, like Julius Caesar.

"I suppose," said Tom, "she cuts up a great whale like you into a whole shoal of porpoises?"

At which the old whale laughed so violently that he coughed up all the creatures; who swam away again, very thankful at having escaped out of that terrible whalebone net of his, from which bourne no traveler returns; and Tom went on to the iceberg, wondering.

And when he came near it, it took the form of the grandest old lady he had ever seen—a white marble lady, sitting on a white marble throne. And from the foot of the throne there swam away, out and out into the sea, millions of newborn creatures, of more shapes and colours than man ever dreamed. And they were Mother Carey's children, whom she makes out of the sea water all day long.

She sat quite still with her chin upon her hand, looking down into the sea with two great, grand blue eyes, as blue as the sea itself. Her hair was as white as the snow, for she was very, very old—in fact, as old as anything which you are likely to come across, except the difference between right and wrong.

And when she saw Tom, she looked at him very kindly.

"What do you want, my little man? It is long since I have seen a water baby here."

Tom told her his errand, and asked the way to the Other-end-of-Nowhere.

"You ought to know yourself, for you have been there already."

"Have I, ma'am? I'm sure I forgot all about it."

MOTHER CAREY

"Then look at me."

And as Tom looked into her great blue eyes, he recollected the way perfectly.

Now, was not that strange?

"Thank you, ma'am," said Tom. "Then I

won't trouble your ladyship any more; I hear you are very busy."

"And now, my pretty little man," said Mother Carey, "you are sure you know the way to the Other-end-of-Nowhere?"

Tom thought; and behold, he had forgotten it utterly.

"That is because you took your eyes off me."

Tom looked at her again, and recollected; and then looked away, and forgot in an instant.

"But what am I to do, ma'am? For I can't keep looking at you when I am somewhere else."

"You must do without me, as most people have to do, for nine hundred and ninety-nine thousandths of their lives; and look at the dog instead; for he knows the way well enough, and will not forget it. Besides, you may meet some very queer-tempered people there, who will not let you pass without this passport of mine, which you must hang round your neck and take care of; and, of course, as the dog will always go behind you, you must go the whole way backward."

"Backward!" cried Tom. "Then I shall not be able to see my way."

"On the contrary, if you look forward, you will not see a step before you, and be certain to go wrong; but if you look behind you, and watch carefully whatever you have passed, and especially keep your eye on the dog, who goes by instinct, and therefore can't go wrong, then you will know what is coming next, as plainly as if you saw it in a looking-glass."

Tom was very much astonished; but he obeyed her, for he had learnt always to believe what the fairies told him.

Tom was very sorely tried; for though, by keeping the dog to heels (or rather to toes, for he had to walk backward), he could see pretty well which way the dog was hunting, yet it was much slower work to go backwards than to go forwards.

But I am proud to say that, though Tom had not been to Cambridge—for if he had he would have certainly been senior wrangler—he was such a little dogged, hard, gnarly, foursquare brick of an English boy, that he never turned his head round once all the way from Peacepool to the Other-end-of-Nowhere; but kept his eye on the dog, and let him pick out the scent, hot or cold, straight or crooked, wet or dry, up hill or down dale; by which means he never made a mistake, or had to retrace a single step.

CHAPTER VIII AND LAST

NOW, as soon as Tom had left Peace-pool, he came to the white lap of the great sea mother, ten thousand fathoms deep; where she makes world-pap all day long, for the steam giants to knead, and the fire giants to bake, till it has risen and hardened into mountain-loaves and island-cakes.

And there Tom was very near being kneaded up in the world-pap, and turned into a fossil water baby; which would have astonished the Geological Society of New Zealand some hundreds of thousands of years hence.

For as he walked along in the silence of the sea twilight, on the soft white ocean floor, he was aware of a hissing, and a roaring, and a thumping, and a pumping, as of all the steam engines in the world at once. And when he came near, the water grew boiling hot; not that that hurt him in the least; but it also grew as foul as gruel; and every moment he stumbled over dead shells, and fish, and sharks, and seals, and whales, which had been killed by the hot water.

And at last he came to the great sea serpent himself, lying dead at the bottom; and as he was too thick to scramble over, Tom had to walk round him three quarters of a mile and more, which put him out of his path sadly; and when he had got round, he came to the place called

Stop. And there he stopped, and just in time.

For he was on the edge of a vast hole in the bottom of the sea, up which was rushing and roaring clear steam enough to work all the engines in the world at once; so clear, indeed, that it was quite light at moments, and Tom could see almost up to the top of the water above, and down below into the pit for nobody knows how far.

But as soon as he bent his head over the edge, he got such a rap on the nose from pebbles, that he jumped back again; for the steam, as it rushed up, rasped away the sides of the hole, and hurled it up into the sea in a shower of mud and gravel and ashes; and then it spread all around, and sank again, and covered in the dead fish so fast, that before Tom had stood there five minutes he was buried in silt up to his ankles, and began to be afraid that he should have been buried alive.

And perhaps he would have been, but that while he was thinking, the whole piece of ground on which he stood was torn up and blown upwards, and away flew Tom a mile up through the sea, wondering what was coming next.

At last he stopped—thump! and found himself tight in the legs of the most wonderful bogy which he had ever seen.

It had I don't know how many wings, as big as the sails of a windmill, and spread out in a ring like them; and with them it hovered over the steam which rushed up, as a ball hovers over the top of a fountain. And for every wing before

it had a leg below, with a claw like a comb at the tip, and a nostril at the root; and in the middle it had no stomach and one eye; and as for its mouth, that was all on one side, as the madreporiform tubercle in a starfish is. Well, it was a very strange beast; but no stranger than some dozens which you may see.

"What do you want here," it cried quite peevishly, "getting in my way?" and it tried to drop Tom; but he held on tight to its claws, thinking himself safer where he was.

So Tom told him who he was, and what his errand was. And the thing winked its one eye, and sneered:

"I am too old to be taken in in that way. You are come after gold—I know you are."

"Gold! What is gold?" And really Tom did not know; but the suspicious old bogy would not believe him.

But after a while Tom began to understand a little. For, as the vapours came up out of the hole, the bogy smelt them with his nostrils, and combed them and sorted them with his combs; and then, when they steamed up through them against his wings, they were changed into showers and streams of metal. From one wing fell gold dust, and from another silver, and from another copper, and from another tin, and from another lead, and so on, and sank into the soft mud, into veins and cracks, and hardened there. Whereby it comes to pass that the rocks are full of metal.

But, all of a sudden, somebody shut off the

steam below, and the hole was left empty in an instant; and then down rushed the water into the hole, in such a whirlpool that the bogy spun round and round as fast as a teetotum. But that was all in his day's work, like a fair fall with the hounds; so all he did was to say to Tom:

"Now is your time, youngster, to get down, if you are in earnest, which I don't believe."

"You'll soon see," said Tom; and away he went, as bold as Baron Munchausen, and shot down the rushing cataract like a salmon at Ballisodare.

And when he got to the bottom, he swam till he was washed on shore safe upon the Other-end-of-Nowhere; and he found it, to his surprise, as most other people do, much more like This-end-of-Somewhere than he had been in the habit of expecting.

There Tom saw ploughs drawing horses, nails driving hammers, birds' nests taking boys, books making authors, bulls keeping china shops, monkeys shaving cats, dead dogs drilling live lions, and, in short, every one set to do something which he had not learnt, because in what he had learnt, or pretended to learn, he had failed.

On the borders of that island he found Gotham, where the wise men live; the same who dragged the pond because the moon had fallen into it, and planted a hedge round the cuckoo, to keep spring all the year. And he found them bricking up the town gate, because it was so wide that little folks could not get through.

So he went on, for it was no business of his; only he could not help saying that in his country if the kitten could not get in at the same hole as the cat, she might stay outside and mew.

Then Tom came to a very famous island, which was called, in the days of the great traveler Captain Gulliver, the Isle of Laputa.[33] But Mrs. Bedonebyasyoudid has named it over again, the Isle of Tomtoddies, all heads and no bodies.

And when Tom came near it, he heard such a grumbling and grunting and growling and wailing and weeping and whining that he thought people must be ringing little pigs, or cropping puppies' ears, or drowning kittens; but when he came nearer still, he began to hear words among the noise; which was the Tomtoddies' song which they sing morning and evening, and all night too, to their great idol Examination—

"*I can't learn my lesson; the examiner's coming!*"

And that was the only song which they knew.

And when Tom got on shore the first thing he saw was a great pillar, on one side of which was inscribed, "Playthings not allowed here;" at which he was so shocked that he would not stay to see what was written on the other side. Then he looked round for the people of the island; but instead of men, women, and children, he

33. Swift describes, in *Gulliver's Travels*, a flying island, called Laputa. The inhabitants were quacks, so absorbed in their false science that they had eyes and ears for nothing else, and were therefore followed about by servants who "flapped" them with a blown-up bladder, when they were expected to hear or to see or to say anything.

found nothing but turnips and radishes, beets and mangold wurzel, without a single green leaf among them, and half of them burst and decayed, with toadstools growing out of them. Those which were left began crying to Tom, in half a dozen different languages at once, and all of them badly spoken, "I can't learn my lesson; do come and help me!"

"And what good on earth would it do you if I did help you?" quoth Tom.

Well, they didn't know that; all they knew was the examiner was coming.

Then Tom stumbled on the hugest and softest nimblecomequick turnip you ever saw filling a hole in a crop of swedes, and it cried to him, "Can you tell me anything at all about anything you like?"

"About what?" says Tom.

"About anything you like; for as fast as I learn things I forget them again. So my mamma says that my intellect is not adapted for methodic science, and says that I must go in for general information."

Tom told him that he did not know general information, nor any officers in the army; only he had a friend once that went for a drummer; but he could tell him a great many strange things which he had seen in his travels.

So he told him prettily enough, while the poor turnip listened very carefully; and the more he listened, the more he forgot, and the more water ran out of him.

Tom thought he was crying; but it was only

his poor brains running away, from being worked so hard; and as Tom talked, the unhappy turnip streamed down all over with juice, and split and shrank till nothing was left of him but rind and water; whereat Tom ran away in a fright, for he thought he might be taken up for killing the turnip.

But, on the contrary, the turnip's parents were highly delighted, and considered him a saint and a martyr, and put up a long inscription over his tomb about his wonderful talents, early development, and unparalleled precocity. Were they not a foolish couple? But there was a still more foolish couple next to them, who were beating a wretched little radish, no bigger than my thumb, for sullenness and obstinacy and wilful stupidity, and never knew that the reason why it couldn't learn or hardly even speak was, that there was a great worm inside it eating out all its brains. But even they are no foolisher than some hundred score of papas and mammas, who fetch the rod when they ought to fetch a new toy, and send to the dark cupboard instead of to the doctor.

Tom was so puzzled and frightened with all he saw, that he was longing to ask the meaning of it; and at last he stumbled over a respectable old stick lying half covered with earth. But a very stout and worthy stick it was, for it belonged to good Roger Ascham[34] in old time.

34. Roger Ascham was a famous English scholar and writer of the sixteenth century. He was teacher of languages to Princess, afterward Queen, Elizabeth, and later, was Latin secretary to both Queen Mary and Queen Elizabeth.

"You see," said the stick, "they were as pretty little children once as you could wish to see, and might have been so still if they had been only left to grow up like human beings, and then handed over to me; but their foolish fathers and mothers, instead of letting them pick flowers, and make dirt-pies, and get birds' nests, and dance round the gooseberry bush, as little children should, kept them always at lessons, working, working, working, learning week-day lessons all week-days, and Sunday lessons all Sunday, and weekly examinations every Saturday, and monthly examinations every month, and yearly examinations every year, everything seven times over, as if once was not enough, and enough as good as a feast—till their brains grew big, and their bodies grew small, and they were all changed into turnips, with little but water inside; and still their foolish parents actually pick the leaves off them as fast as they grow, lest they should have anything green about them."

"Ah!" said Tom, "if dear Mrs. Doasyouwouldbedoneby knew of it she would send them a lot of tops, and balls, and marbles, and ninepins, and make them all as jolly as sand-boys."

"It would be no use," said the stick. "They can't play now, if they tried. Don't you see how their legs have turned to roots and grown into the ground, by never taking any exercise, but sapping and moping always in the same place?

"But here comes the Examiner-of-all-Examiners. So you had better get away, I warn you,

or he will examine you and your dog into the bargain, and set him to examine all the other dogs, and you to examine all the other water babies. There is no escaping out of his hands, for his nose is nine thousand miles long, and can go down chimneys, and through keyholes, upstairs, downstairs, in my lady's chamber, examining all little boys, and the little boys' tutors likewise. But when he is thrashed—so Mrs. Bedonebyasyoudid has promised me—I shall have the thrashing of him; and if I don't lay it on with a will it's a pity."

Tom went off, but rather slowly and surlily; for he was somewhat minded to face this same Examiner-of-all-Examiners, who came striding among the poor turnips, binding heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and laying them on little children's shoulders, like the Scribes and Pharisees of old, and not touching the same with one of his fingers; for he had plenty of money, and a fine house to live in, and so forth; which was more than the poor little turnips had.

And next he came to Oldwivesfabledom, where the folks were all heathens, and worshipped a howling ape.

And there he found a little boy sitting in the middle of the road, and crying bitterly.

"What are you crying for?" said Tom.

"Because I am not so frightened as I could wish to be."

"Not frightened? You are a queer little chap: but, if you want to be frightened, here goes—Boo!"

"Ah," said the little boy, "that is very kind of you; but I don't feel that it has made any impression."

Tom offered to upset him, punch him, stamp on him, fettle him over the head with a brick, or anything else whatsoever which would give him the slightest comfort.

But he only thanked Tom very civilly, in fine long words which he had heard other folk use, and which, therefore, he thought were fit and proper to use himself; and cried on till his papa and mamma came.

Then Tom came to a very quiet place, called Leaveheavenalone. And there the sun was drawing water out of the sea to make steam-threads, and the wind was twisting them up to make cloud-patterns, till they had worked between them the loveliest wedding veil of Chantilly lace, and hung it up in their own Crystal Palace for any one to buy who could afford it; while the good old sea never grudged, for she knew they would pay her back honestly. So the sun span, and the wind wove, and all went well with the great steam loom; as is likely, considering —and considering—and considering—

And at last, after innumerable adventures, each more wonderful than the last, Tom saw before him a huge building.

He walked towards it, wondering what it was, and having a strange fancy that he might find Mr. Grimes inside it, till he saw running toward him, and shouting "Stop!" three or four people, who, when they came nearer, were

nothing else than policemen's truncheons, running along without legs or arms.

Tom was not astonished. He was long past that. Neither was he frightened; for he had been doing no harm.

So he stopped; and when the foremost truncheon came up and asked his business, he showed Mother Carey's pass; and the truncheon looked at it in the oddest fashion; for he had one eye in the middle of his upper end, so that when he looked at anything, being quite stiff, he had to slope himself, and poke himself, till it was a wonder why he did not tumble over; but, being quite full of the spirit of justice (as all policemen, and their truncheons, ought to be), he was always in a position of stable equilibrium, whichever way he put himself.

"All right—pass on," said he at last. And then he added: "I had better go with you, young man." And Tom had no objection, for such company was both respectable and safe; so the truncheon coiled its thong neatly round its handle, to prevent tripping itself up—for the thong had got loose in running—and marched on by Tom's side.

"Why have you no policeman to carry you?" asked Tom after a while.

"Because we are not like those clumsy-made truncheons in the land world, which cannot go without having a whole man to carry them about. We do our own work for ourselves; and do it very well, though I say it who should not."

"Then why have you a thong to your handle?" asked Tom.

"To hang ourselves up by, of course, when we are off duty."

Tom had got his answer, and had no more to say, till they came up to the great iron door of the prison. And there the truncheon knocked twice, with its own head.

A wicket in the door opened, and out looked a tremendous old brass blunderbuss charged up to the muzzle with slugs, who was the porter; and Tom started back a little at the sight of him.

"What case is this?" he asked in a deep voice, out of his broad bell mouth.

"If you please, sir, it is no case; only a young gentleman from her ladyship, who wants to see Grimes, the master sweep."

"Grimes?" said the blunderbuss. And he pulled in his muzzle, perhaps to look over his prison lists.

"Grimes is up chimney No. 345," he said from inside. "So the young gentleman had better go on to the roof."

Tom looked up at the enormous wall, which seemed at least ninety miles high, and wondered how he should ever get up; but when he hinted that to the truncheon, it settled the matter in a moment. For it whisked round, and gave him such a shove behind as sent him up to the roof in no time, with his little dog under his arm.

And there he walked along the leads, till he met another truncheon, and told him his errand.

"Very good," it said. "Come along; but it will be of no use. He is the most unremorseful, hard-hearted, foul-mouthed fellow I have in charge; and thinks about nothing but beer and pipes, which are not allowed here, of course."

So they walked along over the leads, and very sooty they were, and Tom thought the chimneys must want sweeping very much. But he was surprised to see that the soot did not stick to his feet, or dirty them in the least. Neither did the live coals, which were lying about in plenty, burn him; for he was a water baby.

And at last they came to chimney No. 345. Out of the top of it, his head and shoulders just showing, stuck poor Mr. Grimes, so sooty, and bleared, and ugly, that Tom could hardly bear to look at him. And in his mouth was a pipe; but it was not alight, though he was pulling at it with all his might.

"Attention, Mr. Grimes," said the truncheon; "here is a gentleman come to see you."

But Mr. Grimes only said bad words, and kept grumbling, "My pipe won't draw. My pipe won't draw."

"Keep a civil tongue, and attend!" said the truncheon; and popped up just like Punch, hitting Grimes such a crack over the head with itself, that his brains rattled inside like a dried walnut in its shell. He tried to get his hands out, and rub the place; but he could not, for they were stuck fast in the chimney. Now he was forced to attend.

"Hey!" he said, "why, it's Tom! I suppose you have come here to laugh at me, you spiteful little atomy?"

Tom assured him he had not, but only wanted to help him.

"I don't want anything except beer, and that I can't get; and a light to this bothering pipe, and that I can't get either."

"I'll get you one," said Tom; and he took up a live coal (there were plenty lying about) and put it to Grimes' pipe; but it went out instantly.

"It's no use," said the truncheon, leaning itself up against the chimney and looking on. "I tell you, it is no use. His heart is so cold that it freezes everything that comes near him. You will see that presently, plain enough."

"Oh, of course, it's my fault. Everything's always my fault," said Grimes. "Now don't go to hit me again" (for the truncheon started upright, and looked very wicked); "you know, if my arms were only free, you daren't hit me then."

The truncheon leant back against the chimney, and took no notice of the personal insult, like a well-trained policeman as it was, though it was ready enough to avenge any transgression against morality or order.

"But can't I help you in any other way? Can't I help you to get out of this chimney?" said Tom.

"No," interposed the truncheon; "he has come to the place where everybody must help

himself; and he will find it out, I hope, before he has done with me."

"Oh, yes," said Grimes, "of course it's me. Did I ask to be brought here into the prison? Did I ask to be set to sweep your foul chimneys? Did I ask to have lighted straw put under me to make me go up? Did I ask to stick fast in the very first chimney of all, because it was so shamefully clogged up with soot? Did I ask to stay here—I don't know how long—a hundred years, I do believe, and never get my pipe, nor my beer, nor nothing fit for a beast, let alone a man?"

"No," answered a solemn voice behind. "No more did Tom, when you behaved to him in the very same way."

It was Mrs. Bedonebyasyoudid. And when the truncheon saw her, it started bolt upright—Attention!—and made such a low bow, that if it had not been full of the spirit of justice, it must have tumbled on its end, and probably hurt its one eye. And Tom made his bow too.

"Oh, ma'am," he said, "don't think about me; that's all past and gone, and good times and bad times and all times pass over. But may not I help poor Mr. Grimes? Mayn't I try and get some of these bricks away, that he may move his arms?"

"You may try, of course," she said.

So Tom pulled and tugged at the bricks, but he could not move one. And then he tried to wipe Mr. Grimes' face, but the soot would not come off.

"Oh, dear!" he said. "I have come all this way, through all these terrible places, to help you, and now I am of no use at all."

"You had best leave me alone," said Grimes; "you are a good-natured, forgiving little chap, and that's truth; but you'd best be off. The hail's coming on soon, and it will beat the eyes out of your little head."

"What hail?"

"Why, hail that falls every evening here; and till it comes close to me, it's like so much warm rain; but then it comes to hail over my head, and knocks me about like small shot."

"That hail will never come any more," said the strange lady. "I have told you before what it was. It was your mother's tears, those which she shed when she prayed for you by her bedside; but your cold heart froze it into hail. But she is gone to heaven now, and will weep no more for her graceless son."

Then Grimes was silent awhile; and then he looked very sad.

"So my old mother's gone, and I never there to speak to her! Ah! a good woman she was, and might have been a happy one, in her little school there in Vendale, if it hadn't been for me and my bad ways."

"Did she keep the school at Vendale?" asked Tom. And then he told Grimes all the story of his going to her house, and how she could not abide the sight of a chimney-sweep, and then how kind she was, and how he turned into a water baby.

"Ah!" said Grimes, "good reason she had to hate the sight of a chimney-sweep. I ran away from her and took up with the sweeps, and never let her know where I was, nor sent her a penny to help her, and now it's too late—too late!" said Mr. Grimes.

And he began crying and blubbering like a great baby, till his pipe dropped out of his mouth, and broke all to bits.

"Oh, dear, if I was but a little chap in Vendale again, to see the clear beck, and the apple orchard, and the yew hedge, how different I would go on! But it's too late now. So you go along, you kind little chap, and don't stand to look at a man crying, that's old enough to be your father, and never feared the face of man, nor of worse neither. But I'm beat now, and beat I must be. I've made my bed, and I must lie on it. Foul I would be, and foul I am, as an Irishwoman said to me once; and little I heeded it. It's all my own fault: but it's too late." And he cried so bitterly that Tom began crying too.

"Never too late," said the fairy, in such a strange, soft, new voice that Tom looked up at her; and she was so beautiful for the moment, that Tom half fancied she was her sister.

No more was it too late. For as poor Grimes cried and blubbered on, his own tears did what his mother's could not do, and Tom's could not do, and nobody's on earth could do for him; for they washed the soot off his face and off his clothes; and then they washed the mortar away from be-

tween the bricks; and the chimney crumbled down; and Grimes began to get out of it.

Up jumped the truncheon, and was going to hit him on the crown a tremendous thump, and drive him down again like a cork into a bottle. But the strange lady put it aside.

"Will you obey me if I give you a chance?"

"As you please, ma'am. You're stronger than me—that I know too well, and wiser than me, I know too well also. And as for being my own master, I've fared ill enough with that as yet. So whatever your ladyship pleases to order me; for I'm beat, and that's the truth."

"Be it so then—you may come out. But remember, disobey me again, and into a worse place still you go."

"I beg pardon, ma'am, but I never disobeyed you that I know of. I never had the honour of setting eyes upon you till I came to these ugly quarters."

"Never saw me? Who said to you, 'Those that will be foul, foul they will be'?"

Grimes looked up; and Tom looked up too: for the voice was that of the Irishwoman who met them the day that they went out together to Harthover. "I gave you your warning then, but you gave it yourself a thousand times before and since. Every bad word that you said—every cruel and mean thing that you did—every time that you got tipsy—every day that you went dirty—you were disobeying me, whether you knew it or not."

"If I'd only known, ma'am——"

"You knew well enough that you were disobeying something, though you did not know it was me. But come out and take your chance. Perhaps it may be your last."

So Grimes stepped out of the chimney, and really, if it had not been for the scars on his face, he looked as clean and respectable as a master sweep need look.

"Take him away," she said to the truncheon, "and give him his ticket of leave."

"And what is he to do, ma'am?"

"Get him to sweep out the crater of Etna; he will find some very steady men working out their time there, who will teach him his business: but mind, if that crater gets choked again, and there is an earthquake in consequence, bring them all to me, and I shall investigate the case very severely."

So the truncheon marched off Mr. Grimes, looking as meek as a drowned worm.

And for aught I know, or do not know, he is sweeping the crater of Etna to this very day.

"And now," said the fairy to Tom, "your work here is done. You may as well go back again."

"I should be glad enough to go," said Tom, "but how am I to get up that great hole again, now the steam has stopped blowing?"

"I will take you up the back stairs, but I must bandage your eyes first; for I never allow anybody to see those back stairs of mine."

"I am sure I shall not tell anybody about them, ma'am, if you bid me not."

"Aha! So you think, my little man. But you would soon forget your promise if you got back into the land world. I never put things into little folks' heads which are but too likely to come there of themselves. So come—now I must bandage your eyes."

So she tied the bandage on his eyes with one hand, and with the other she took it off.

"Now," she said, "you are safe up the stairs." Tom opened his eyes very wide, and his mouth, too; for he had not, as he thought, moved a single step. But, when he looked round him, there could be no doubt that he was safe up the back stairs, whatsoever they may be, which no man is going to tell you, for the plain reason that no man knows.

The first thing which Tom saw was the black cedars, high and sharp against the rosy dawn; and Saint Brandan's Isle reflected double in the still, broad, silver sea. The wind sang softly in the cedars, and the water sang among the caves: the sea birds sang as they streamed out into the ocean, and the land birds as they built among the boughs; and the air was so full of song that it stirred Saint Brandan and her hermits, as they slumbered in the shade; and they moved their good old lips, and sang their morning hymn amid their dreams. But among all the songs one came across the water more sweet and clear than all; for it was the song of a young girl's voice.

And what was the song which she sang?

Ah, my little man, I am too old to sing that song, and you too young to understand it. But have patience, and keep your eye single, and your hands clean, and you will learn some day to sing it yourself, without needing any man to teach you.

And as Tom neared the island, there sat upon a rock the most graceful creature that ever was seen, looking down, with her chin upon her hand, and paddling with her feet in the water. And when they came to her she looked up, and behold, it was Ellie.

"Oh, Miss Ellie," said he, "how you are grown!"

"Oh, Tom," said she, "how you are grown, too!"

And no wonder; they were both quite grown up—he into a tall man, and she into a beautiful woman.

"Perhaps I may be grown," she said. "I have had time enough; for I have been sitting here waiting for you many a hundred years, till I thought you were never coming."

"Many a hundred years?" thought Tom; but he had seen so much in his travels that he had quite given up being astonished; and, indeed, he could think of nothing but Ellie. So he stood and looked at Ellie, and Ellie looked at him; and they liked the employment so much that they stood and looked for seven years more, and neither spoke nor stirred.

At last they heard the fairy say, "Attention, children. Are you never going to look at me again?"

"We have been looking at you all this while," they said. And so they thought they had been.

"Then look at me once more," she said.

They looked—and both of them cried out at once, "Oh, who are you, after all?"

"You are our dear Mrs. Doasyouwouldbedoneby."

"No, you are good Mrs. Bedonebyasyoudid; but you are grown quite beautiful now!"

"To you," said the fairy. "But look again."

"You are Mother Carey," said Tom, in a very low, solemn voice; for he had found out something which made him very happy, and yet frightened him more than all that he had ever seen.

"But you are grown quite young again."

"To you," said the fairy. "Look again."

"You are the Irishwoman who met me the the day I went to Harthover!"

And when they looked she was neither of them, and yet all of them at once.

"My name is written in my eyes, if you have eyes to see it there."

And they looked into her great, deep, soft eyes, and they changed again and again into every hue, as the light changes in a diamond.

"Now read my name," said she, at last.

And her eyes flashed, for one moment, clear, white, blazing light; but the children could not read her name; for they were dazzled, and hid their faces in their hands.

"Not yet, young things, not yet," said she, smiling; and then she turned to Ellie.

"You may take him home with you now on Sundays, Ellie. He has won his spurs in the great battle, and become fit to go with you and be a man, because he has done the thing he did not like."

So Tom went home with Ellie on Sundays, and sometimes on week-days, too; and he is now a great man of science, and can plan railroads, and steam engines, and electric telegraphs, and rifled guns, and so forth; and knows everything about everything, except why a hen's egg doesn't turn into a crocodile, and two or three other little things. And all this from what he learnt when he was a water baby, underneath the sea.

"And of course Tom married Ellie?"

My dear child, what a silly notion! Don't you know that no one ever marries in a fairy tale, under the rank of a prince or a princess?

"And Tom's dog?"

Oh, you may see him any clear night in July; for the old dog star was so worn out by the last three hot summers that there have been no dog days since; so that they had to take him down and put Tom's dog up in his place. Therefore, as new brooms sweep clean, we may hope for some warm weather this year. And that is the end of my story.

MORAL

And now, my dear little man, what should we learn from this parable?

We should learn thirty-seven or thirty-nine

things, I am not exactly sure which; but one thing, at least, we may learn, and that is this—when we see efts in the pond, never to throw stones at them, or catch them with crooked pins. For these efts are nothing else but the water babies who are stupid and dirty, and will not learn their lessons and keep themselves clean; and therefore, their skulls grow flat, their jaws grow out, and their brains grow small, and their tails grow long, and their skins grow dirty and spotted, and they never get into the clear rivers, much less into the great wide sea, but hang about in dirty ponds, and live in the mud, and eat worms, as they deserve to do.

But that is no reason why you should ill-use them; but only why you should pity them, and be kind to them, and hope that some day they will wake up, and be ashamed of their nasty, dirty, lazy, stupid life, and try to amend, and become something better once more. For, perhaps, if they do so, then after 379,423 years, nine months, thirteen days, two hours, and twenty-one minutes, if they work very hard and wash very hard all that time, their brains may grow bigger, and their jaws grow smaller, and their tails wither off, and they will turn into water babies again, and perhaps after that into land babies; and after that perhaps into grown men.

Meanwhile, do you learn your lessons, and thank God that you have plenty of cold water to wash in; and wash in it too, like a true Englishman. And then, if my story is not true, something better is; and if I am not quite right, still

you will be, as long as you stick to hard work and cold water.

But remember always, as I told you at first, that this is all a fairy tale, and only fun and pretence: and, therefore, you are not to believe a word of it, even if it is true.

THE FAIRIES OF THE CALDON-LOW

MARY HOWITT

"And where have you been, my Mary,
And where have you been from me?"
"I 've been to the top of the Caldon-Low,
The midsummer night to see!"

"And what did you see, my Mary,
All up on the Caldon-Low?"
"I saw the blithe sunshine come down,
And I saw the merry winds blow."

"And what did you hear, my Mary,
All up on the Caldon-Hill?"
"I heard the drops of water made,
And I heard the corn-ears fill."

"Oh, tell me all, my Mary—
All, all that ever you know;
For you must have seen the fairies
Last night on the Caldon-Low."

"Then take me on your knee, mother,
And listen, mother of mine:
A hundred fairies danced last night,
And the harpers they were nine;

"And merry was the glee of the harp-strings,
And their dancing feet so small;
But, oh! the sound of their talking
Was merrier far than all!"

THE HARPERS THEY WERE NINE

"And what were the words, my Mary,
That you did hear them say?"
"I'll tell you all, my mother,
But let me have my way.

"And some they played with the water,
And rolled it down the hill;
'And this,' they said, 'shall speedily turn
The poor old miller's mill;

"'For there has been no water
Ever since the first of May;
And a busy man shall the miller be
By the dawning of the day!

"'Oh, the miller, how he will laugh,
When he sees the milldam rise!
The jolly old miller, how he will laugh,
Till the tears fill both his eyes!'

"And some they seized the little winds,
That sounded over the hill,
And each put a horn into his mouth,
And blew so sharp and shrill!

"'And there,' said they, 'the merry winds go
Away from every horn;
And those shall clear the mildew dank
From the blind old widow's corn:

"'Oh, the poor blind widow—
Though she has been blind so long,
She'll be merry enough when the mildew's gone,
And the corn stands stiff and strong!'

"And some they brought the brown linseed,
And flung it down from the Low:
'And this,' said they, 'by the sunrise,
In the weaver's croft shall grow!

"'Oh, the poor lame weaver!
How will he laugh outright
When he sees his dwindling flax field
All full of flowers by night!'

"And then up spoke a brownie,
With a long beard on his chin;
'I have spun up all the tow,' said he.
'And I want some more to spin.

"'I've spun a piece of hempen cloth,
And I want to spin another-
A little sheet for Mary's bed
And an apron for her mother!'

"And with that I could not help but laugh,
And I laughed out loud and free;
And then on the top of the Caldon-Low
There was no one left but me.

"And all on the top of the Caldon-Low
The mists were cold and gray,
And nothing I saw but the mossy stones
That round about me lay.

"But as I came down from the hilltop,
I heard, afar below,
How busy the jolly miller was,
And how merry the wheel did go!

"And I peeped into the widow's field,
And, sure enough, was seen
The yellow ears of the mildewed corn
All standing stiff and green!

"And down by the weaver's croft I stole,
To see if the flax were high;
But I saw the weaver at his gate
With the good news in his eye!

"Now, this is all that I heard, mother,
And all that I did see;
So, prithee, make my bed, mother,
For I'm tired as I can be!"

WHO STOLE THE BIRD'S NEST?

L. MARIA CHILD

"To-whit! to-whit! to-whee!
Will you listen to me?
Who stole four eggs I laid,
And the nice nest I made?"

"Not I," said the cow; "Moo-oo!
Such a thing I'd never do.
I gave you a wisp of hay,
But didn't take your nest away.
Not I," said the cow; "Moo-oo!
Such a thing I'd never do."

"To-whit! to-whit! to-whee!
Will you listen to me?
Who stole four eggs I laid,
And the nice nest I made?"

"Bob-o'-link! Bob-o'-link!
Now, what do you think?
Who stole a nest away
From the plum tree, to-day?"

"Not I," said the dog; "Bow-wow!
I wouldn't be so mean, anyhow!
I gave hairs the nest to make,
But the nest I did not take.
Not I," said the dog; "Bow-wow!
I'm not so mean, anyhow."

"To-whit! to-whit! to-whee!
Will you listen to me?
Who stole four eggs I laid,
And the nice nest I made?"

"Bob-o'-link! Bob-o'-link!
Now what do you think?
Who stole a nest away
From the plum tree, to-day?"

"Coo-coo! Coo-coo! Coo-coo!
Let me speak a word, too!
Who stole that pretty nest
From little yellow-breast?"

"Not I," said the sheep; "Oh, no!
I wouldn't treat a poor bird so.
I gave wool the nest to line,
But the nest was none of mine.
Baa! Baa!" said the sheep; "Oh, no,
I wouldn't treat a poor bird so."

"To-whit! to-whit! to-whee!
Will you listen to me?
Who stole four eggs I laid,
And the nice nest I made?"

"Bob-o'-link! Bob-o'-link!
Now, what do you think?
Who stole a nest away
From the plum tree, to-day?"

"Coo-coo! Coo-coo! Coo-coo!
Let me speak a word, too!

Who stole that pretty nest
From little yellow-breast?"

"Caw! Caw!" cried the crow;
"I should like to know
What thief took away
A bird's nest to-day?"

"Cluck! Cluck!" said the hen,
"Don't ask me again.
Why, I haven't a chick
Would do such a trick.
We all gave her a feather,
And she wove them together.
I'd scorn to intrude
On her and her brood.
Cluck! Cluck!" said the hen,
"Don't ask me again."

"Chirr-a-whirr! Chirr-a-whirr!
All the birds make a stir!
Let us find out his name,
And all cry, 'For shame!'"

"I would not rob a bird,"
Said little Mary Green;
"I think I never heard
Of anything so mean."

"It is very cruel, too,"
Said little Alice Neal;
"I wonder if he knew
How sad the bird would feel?"

A LITTLE BOY HUNG DOWN HIS HEAD

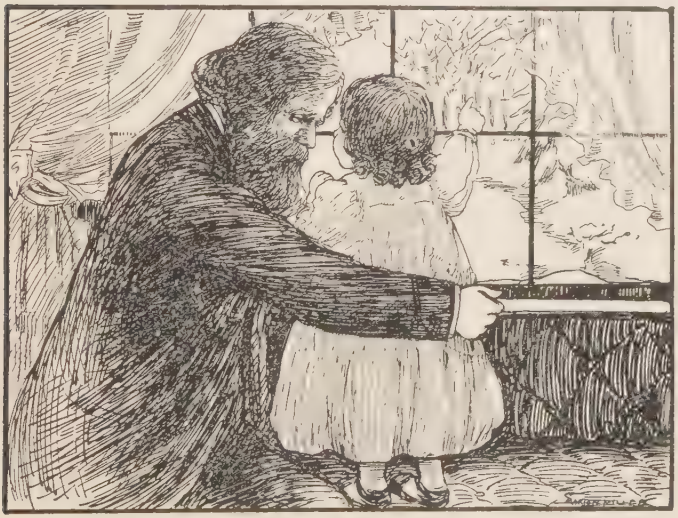
A little boy hung down his head,
And went and hid behind the bed;
For *he* stole that pretty nest
From poor little yellow-breast;
And he felt so full of shame,
He didn't like to tell his name.

In this little dialogue, what part do the birds take? What part do the animals take?

THE FIRST SNOWFALL

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

The snow had begun in the gloaming,
And busily all the night
Had been heaping field and highway
With a silence deep and white.



"WHO MAKES IT SNOW?"

Every pine and fir and hemlock
Wore ermine too dear for an earl,
And the poorest twig on the elm tree
Was ridged inch deep with pearl.

From sheds new-roofed with Carrara
Came Chanticleer's muffled crow,
The stiff rails were softened to swan's-down,
And still fluttered down the snow.

I stood and watched by the window
The noiseless work of the sky,
And the sudden flurries of snowbirds,
Like brown leaves whirling by.

I thought of a mound in sweet Auburn
Where a little headstone stood;
How the flakes were folding it gently,
As did robins the babes in the wood.

Up spoke our own little Mabel,
Saying, "Father, who makes it snow?"
And I told of the good All-father
Who cares for us here below.

Again I looked at the snowfall,
And thought of the leaden sky
That arched o'er our first great sorrow,
When that mound was heaped so high.

I remembered the gradual patience
That fell from that cloud like snow,
Flake by flake, healing and hiding
The scar of our deep-plunged woe.

And again to the child I whispered,
"The snow that husheth all,
Darling, the merciful Father
Alone can make it fall!"

Then, with eyes that saw not, I kissed her;
And she, kissing back, could not know
That *my* kiss was given to her sister,
Folded close under deepening snow.[1]

1. Lowell refers here to a daughter, Blanche, who died shortly before the birth of his daughter Rosa.

THE STORY OF ESTHER

I

NOW it came to pass in the third year of the reign of Ahasuerus, when the king sat on the throne which is in Shushan the palace, he made a feast unto all his princes and servants, and showed the riches of his glorious kingdom for many days.

And when these days were expired, the king made a feast in Shushan the palace, seven days, in the court of the garden of the king's palace.

The silken hangings were white, green, and blue, fastened with cords of fine linen and purple to silver rings and pillars of marble; and the couches were of gold and silver, upon a pavement of red, and blue, and white, and black marble.

On the seventh day, when the heart of the king was merry, he commanded the chamberlains that served in his presence to bring Vashti the queen before the king with the crown royal, to show the people and the princes her beauty; for she was fair to look on.

But the queen Vashti refused to come at the king's commandment by his chamberlains; therefore was the king very wroth, and his anger burned in him.

Then the king said to the wise men, "What

shall I do unto Queen Vashti because she has not performed the commandment of the King?"

And they answered before the king, "Vashti the queen hath done wrong not to the king only, but also to the princes and to all the people in all the provinces of the king's dominions. Therefore, if it please the king, let there go a royal commandment from him, and let it be written among the laws of the Persians and the Medes, which may not be altered, 'Vashti shall come no more before King Ahasuerus;' and let the king give her royal estate unto another that is better than she."

And the saying pleased the king and the princes, and the king did according to the word of the wise men.

II

FTER these things, when the wrath of King Ahasuerus was appeased, the servants that ministered unto the king said, "Let there be fair young virgins sought for the king. And let the king appoint officers in all the provinces of his kingdom, that they may gather together all the fair young virgins unto Shushan the palace, to the house of the women, unto the custody of Hege the king's chamberlain, and let the maiden which pleaseth the king be queen instead of Vashti."

And the thing pleased the king; and he did so.

Now in Shushan the palace there was a certain Jew, whose name was Mordecai, who had been

carried from Jerusalem into captivity by Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, and who brought up Esther, his uncle's daughter. She had neither father nor mother, and the maid was fair and beautiful; whom Mordecai took for his own daughter. So it came to pass, when the king's commandment and his decree were heard, and when many maidens were gathered together unto Shushan the palace, that Esther was brought also unto the king's house, to the custody of Hege.

The maiden pleased him, and she obtained kindness of him, and he preferred her and her maids unto the best in the house of the women. And Mordecai walked every day before the court of the women's house, to know how Esther did, and what should become of her.

So Esther was taken unto King Ahasuerus, and the king loved Esther above all the women, and she obtained grace and favour in his sight more than all the virgins; so he set the royal crown upon her head, and made her queen instead of Vashti.

Then the king made a great feast unto all his princes and his servants, even Esther's feast.

And when the virgins were gathered together the second time, then Mordecai sat in the king's gate.

Esther had not yet told her kindred nor her people, as Mordecai had charged her; for Esther did the commandment of Mordecai, like as when she was brought up by him.

In those days, while Mordecai sat in the king's

gate, two of the king's chamberlains, who kept the door, were wroth, and sought to lay hand on the king Ahasuerus.

And the thing was known to Mordecai, who told it unto Esther the queen; and Esther told the king thereof in Mordecai's name.

And when inquisition was made of the matter, it was found true; therefore they were both hanged on a tree.

III

FTER these things did King Ahasuerus promote Haman the son of Hammedatha, and advanced him, and set his seat above all the princes that were with him.

And all the king's servants, that were in the king's gate, bowed, and reverenced Haman; for the king had so commanded concerning him. But Mordecai bowed not, nor did him reverence.

Then the king's servants, that were in the king's gate, said unto Mordecai, "Why transgressest thou the king's commandment?"

Now, it came to pass, when they spake daily unto him, and he hearkened not unto them, that they told Haman, for Mordecai had told them that he was a Jew.

And when Haman saw that Mordecai bowed not, nor did him reverence, then was Haman full of wrath.

And he thought scorn to lay hands on Mordecai alone; wherefore Haman sought to destroy

all the Jews that were throughout the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus, even all the people of Mordecai.

And Haman said unto King Ahasuerus, "There is a certain people scattered abroad and dispersed among the people in all the provinces of thy kingdom; and their laws are diverse from all people, neither keep they the king's laws; therefore it is not for the king's profit to suffer them.

"If it please the king, let it be written that they may be destroyed, and I will pay ten thousand talents of silver to the hands of those that have the charge of the business, to bring it into the king's treasuries."

And the king took his ring from his hand, and gave it unto Haman, the son of Hammedatha, the Jews' enemy, and said:

"The people are given to thee to do with them as it seemeth good to thee."

Then were the king's scribes called, and there was written according to all that Haman had commanded, unto the king's lieutenants, governors and rulers of every province, and to every people in the kingdom after their own language. And it was written in the name of King Ahasuerus and sealed with the king's ring.

And the letters were sent by posts into all the king's provinces, to destroy and to kill all Jews, both young and old, little children and women, in one day, even upon the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, and to take the spoil of them for a prey.

IV

HEN Mordecai perceived all that was done, he rent his clothes, and put on sackcloth with ashes, and went out into the midst of the city, and cried with a loud and a bitter cry; and came even before the king's gate, for none might enter into the king's gate clothed with sackcloth.

And in every province, whithersoever the king's commandment and his decree came, there was great mourning among the Jews, and fasting, and weeping, and wailing; and many lay in sackcloth and ashes.

So Esther's maids and her chamberlains came and told her about Mordecai. Then was the queen exceedingly grieved; and she sent raiment to clothe Mordecai, and to take away his sackcloth from him; but he received it not.

Then called Esther for the chamberlain whom the king had appointed to attend upon her, and sent him to Mordecai to know what it was, and why it was that he mourned. And the chamberlain went forth to Mordecai unto the street of the city which was before the king's gate.

And Mordecai told him of all that had happened unto him.

Also he gave him the copy of the writing of the decree that was given at Shushan to destroy the Jews, to show it unto Esther, and to charge her that she should go in unto the king, to make supplication unto him, and to make request before him for her people.

MORDECAI CRIED WITH A LOUD AND BITTER CRY

The chamberlain came and told Esther the words of Mordecai, and again Esther sent to Mordecai, saying:

"All the king's servants, and the people of the king's provinces, do know, that for every one, whether man or woman, that shall come

unto the king into the inner court, when he is not called, there is one law to put him to death; except those to whom the king shall hold out the golden sceptre; but I have not been called to come in unto the king these thirty days."

And they told to Mordecai Esther's words.

Then Mordecai commanded to answer Esther, "Think not with thyself that thou shalt escape in the king's house, more than the other Jews.

"For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then shall deliverance arise to the Jews from another source; but thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed. Who knoweth whether thou art not come to the kingdom for such a purpose as this?"

Then Esther bade them return this answer:

"Go, gather together all the Jews that are present in Shushan, and fast ye for me, and neither eat nor drink for three days, night or day; I also, and my maidens, will fast likewise; and so will I go in unto the king, although it is not according to the law; and if I perish, I perish."

So Mordecai went his way, and did according to all that Esther had commanded him.

V

NOW it came to pass on the third day, that Esther put on her royal apparel, and stood in the inner court of the king's house; and the king sat upon his royal throne in the royal house, over against the gate of the house.

And it was so, when the king saw Esther the queen standing in the court, that she obtained favour in his sight; and the king held out to Esther the golden sceptre that was in his hand. So Esther drew near, and touched the top of the sceptre.

Then said the king unto her, "What wilt thou, Queen Esther? and what is thy request? It shall be given thee even to the half of my kingdom."

And Esther answered, "If it seem good unto the king, let the king and Haman come this day unto the banquet that I have prepared for him."

Then the king said, "Cause Haman to make haste, that he may do as Esther hath said."

So the king and Haman came to the banquet that Esther had prepared.

And the king said unto Esther at the banquet, "What is thy petition and thy request, and it shall be given thee even to the half of my kingdom."

Then answered Esther, and said, "My petition and my request is:

"If I have found favour in the sight of the king, and if it please the king to grant my petition, and to perform my request, let the king and Haman come to the banquet that I shall prepare for them, and on the morrow I will make my request as the king hath said."

Then went Haman forth that day joyful and with a glad heart; but when Haman saw, in the king's gate, that Mordecai stood not up, nor

moved for him, he was full of indignation against Mordecai.

Nevertheless Haman refrained himself; and when he came home, he sent and called for his friends, and his wife.

And Haman told them of the glory of his riches, and the multitude of his children, and all the things wherein the king had promoted him, and how he had advanced him above the princes and servants of the king.

Haman said moreover, "Yea, Esther the queen did let no man come in with the king unto the banquet that she had prepared but myself; and to-morrow am I invited unto her also with the king.

"Yet all this availeth me nothing, so long as I see Mordecai the Jew sitting at the king's gate."

Then said his wife and all his friends, "Let a gallows be made of fifty cubits high, and to-morrow speak thou unto the king that Mordecai may be hanged thereon; then go thou in merrily with the king unto the banquet."

And the thing pleased Haman; and he caused the gallows to be made.

VI

ON that night could not the king sleep, and he commanded to bring the book of records of the chronicles; and they were read before the king.

And it was found written therein that Mordecai had told of the two keepers of the door

who had sought to lay hand on King Ahasuerus.

And the king said, "What honour and dignity hath been done to Mordecai for this?"

Then said the king's servants that ministered unto him, "There is nothing done for him."

And the king said, "Who is in the court?"

Now Haman was come into the outward court of the king's house, to ask the king to hang Mordecai on the gallows that he had prepared for him.

And the king's servants said unto Ahasuerus, "Behold, Haman standeth in the court."

And the king said, "Let him come in."

So Haman came in. And the king said unto him, "What shall be done unto the man whom the king delighteth to honour?"

Now Haman thought in his heart, "To whom would the king delight to do honour more than to myself?" And Haman answered the king, "For the man whom the king delighteth to honour, let the royal apparel be brought which the king weareth, and the horse that the king rideth upon, and the crown royal which is set upon his head. And let this apparel and horse be delivered to the hand of one of the king's most noble princes, that they may array the man whom the king delighteth to honour, and bring him on horseback through the street of the city, and proclaim before him, 'Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delighteth to honour.'"

Then the king said to Haman, "Make haste, and take the apparel and the horse, as thou hast said, and do even so to Mordecai the Jew, that

sitteth at the king's gate; let nothing fail of all that thou hast spoken."

Then took Haman the apparel and the horse, and arrayed Mordecai, and brought him on horseback through the street of the city, and proclaimed before him, "Thus shall it be done unto the man whom the king delighteth to honour."

And Mordecai came again to the king's gate. But Haman hasted to his house, mourning, and having his head covered.

And Haman told his wife and all his friends everything that had befallen him.

Then said his wise men and his wife, "If Mordecai be of the seed of the Jews, before whom thou hast begun to fall, thou shalt not prevail against him, but shalt surely fall before him."

And while they were yet talking with him, came the king's chamberlains, and hasted to bring Haman unto the banquet that Esther had prepared.

VII

SO the king and Haman came to the banquet with Esther the queen.

And the king said again unto Esther on the second day at the banquet of wine, "What is thy petition, Queen Esther? and it shall be granted thee; and what is thy request? and it shall be performed, even to the half of the kingdom."

Then Esther the queen answered and said, "If I have found favour in thy sight, O king,

HAMAN WAS AFRAID

and if it please the king, let my life be given me at my petition, and my people at my request, for we are sold, I and my people, to be destroyed, to be slain, and to perish. But if we had been sold for bondmen and bondwomen only, I had held my tongue."

Then the king Ahasuerus answered and said unto Esther the queen, "Who is he, and where is he, that durst presume in his heart to do so?"

And Esther said, "The adversary and enemy is this wicked Haman."

Then Haman was afraid before the king and the queen.

And one of the chamberlains said before the king, "Behold, the gallows fifty cubits high, which Haman had made for Mordecai, who had spoken good for the king, standeth in the house of Haman."

Then the king said, "Hang him thereon."

So they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai. Then was the king's wrath pacified.

VIII

AND Mordecai came before the king; for Esther had told what he was unto her. And the king took off his ring, which he had taken from Haman, and gave it unto Mordecai. And Esther set Mordecai over the house of Haman.

And Esther spake yet again before the king, and fell down at his feet, and besought him with tears to put away the mischief that Haman had devised against the Jews.

Then the king held out the golden sceptre toward Esther. So Esther arose and stood before the king, and said, "If it please the king, and if I have found favour in his sight, and the

ESTHER FELL DOWN AT THE KING'S FEET

thing seem right before the king, and I be pleasing in his eyes, let it be written to reverse the letters devised by Haman the son of Hammedatha, which he wrote to destroy the Jews which are in all the king's provinces; for how can I endure to see the evil that shall come unto

my people? or how can I endure to see the destruction of my kindred?"

Then the king Ahasuerus said unto Esther the queen, and to Mordecai the Jew, "Behold, I have given Esther the house of Haman, and him they have hanged upon the gallows, because he laid his hand upon the Jews.

"Write ye also for the Jews, as it liketh you, in the king's name, and seal it with the king's ring; for the writing which is written in the king's name, and sealed with the king's ring, may no man reverse."

Then were the king's scribes called, and it was written according to all that Mordecai commanded, unto the Jews, unto every province and unto every people according to their writing, and according to their language.

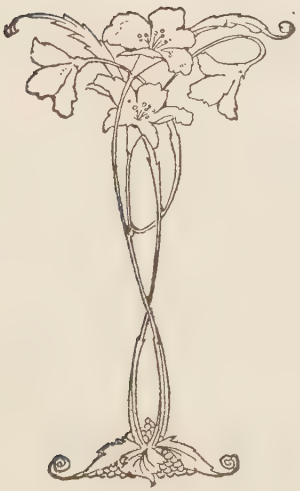
And Mordecai went out from the presence of the king in royal apparel of blue and white, and with a great crown of gold, and with a garment of fine linen and purple; and the city of Shushan rejoiced and was glad.

The Jews had light, and gladness, and joy, and honour.

And in every province, and in every city, whithersoever the king's commandment and his decree came, the Jews had joy and gladness, a feast and a good day. And many of the people of the land became Jews; for the fear of the Jews fell upon them.

The story of Esther as told here is taken from the book of *Esther* in the Bible. It has been

abridged slightly, and in a few cases changes have been made in the wording.



THE DARNING-NEEDLE

HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN

THERE was once a Darning-Needle who thought herself so fine, she imagined she was an embroidering needle.

"Take care, and mind you hold me tight!" she said to the Fingers which took her out. "Don't let me fall! If I fall on the ground I shall certainly never be found again, for I am so fine!"

"That's as it may be," said the Fingers; and they grasped her round the body.

"See, I'm coming with a train!" said the Darning-Needle, and she drew a long thread after her, but there was no knot in the thread.

The Fingers pointed the needle just at the cook's slipper, in which the upper leather had burst, and was to be sewn together.

"That's vulgar work," said the Darning-Needle. "I shall never get through. I'm breaking! I'm breaking!" And she really broke. "Did I not say so?" said the Darning-Needle; "I'm too fine."

"Now it's quite useless," said the Fingers; but they were obliged to hold her fast, all the same; for the cook dropped some sealing wax upon the needle, and pinned her kerchief about her neck with it.

"So now I'm a breastpin!" said the Darning-

Needle. "I knew very well that I should come to honor: when one is something, one comes to something."

And she laughed quietly to herself—and one can never see when a Darning-Needle laughs. There she sat, as proud as if she were in a state coach, and looked all about her.

"May I be permitted to ask if you are gold?" she inquired of the Pin, her neighbor. "You have a very pretty appearance, and a peculiar head, but it is only little. You must take pains to grow, for it's not every one that has sealing wax dropped upon him."

And the Darning-Needle drew herself up so proudly that she fell out of the handkerchief right into the sink, which the cook was rinsing out.

"Now we're going on a journey," said the Darning-Needle. "If I only don't get lost!"

But she really was lost.

"I'm too fine for this world," she observed, as she lay in the gutter. "But I know who I am, and there's always something in that."

So the Darning-Needle kept her proud behavior, and did not lose her good humor. And things of many kinds swam over her—chips and straws and pieces of old newspapers.

"Only look how they sail!" said the Darning-Needle. "They don't know what is under them! I'm here; I remain firmly here. See, there goes a chip thinking of nothing in the world but himself—of a chip! There's a straw going by now. How he turns! How he twirls

about! Don't think only of yourself; you might easily run up against a stone. There swims a bit of newspaper. What's written upon it has long been forgotten, and yet it gives itself airs. I sit quietly and patiently here. I know who I am, and I shall remain what I am."

One day something lay close beside her that glittered splendidly; then the Darning-Needle believed that it was a diamond; but it was a Bit of broken Bottle; and because it shone, the Darning-Needle spoke to it, introducing herself as a breastpin.

"I suppose you are a diamond?" she observed.

"Why, yes, something of that kind."

And then each believed the other to be a very valuable thing; and they began speaking about the world, and how very conceited it was.

"I have been in a lady's box," said the Darning-Needle, "and this lady was a cook. She had five fingers on each hand, and I never saw anything so conceited as those five fingers. And yet they were only there that they might take me out of the box, and put me back into it."

"Were they of good birth?" asked the Bit of Bottle.

"No, indeed," replied the Darning-Needle, "but very haughty. There were five brothers, all of the Finger family. They kept very proudly together, though they were of different lengths. The outermost, the Thumbling, was short and fat; he walked out in front of the ranks, and had only one joint in his back, and could only make

a single bow; but he said if he were hacked off from a man, that man was useless for service in war. Dainty-Mouth, the second finger, thrust himself into sweet and sour, pointed to the sun and moon, and gave the impression when they wrote. Longman, the third, looked at all the others over his shoulder. Goldborder, the fourth, went about with a golden belt round his waist; and little Playman did nothing at all, and was proud of it. There was nothing but bragging among them, and therefore I went away."

"And now we sit here and glitter!" said the Bit of Bottle.

At that moment more water came into the gutter, so that it overflowed, and the Bit of Bottle was carried away.

"So, he is disposed of," observed the Darning-Needle. "I remain here; I am too fine. But that's my pride, and my pride is honorable." And proudly she sat there, and had many great thoughts. "I could almost believe I had been born of a sunbeam, I'm so fine. It really appears to me as if the sunbeams were always seeking for me under the water. Ah! I'm so fine that my mother cannot find me. If I had my old eye, which broke off, I think I should cry; but no, I should not do that; it's not genteel to cry."

One day a couple of street boys lay grubbing in the gutter, where they sometimes found old nails, farthings, and similar treasures. It was dirty work, but they took great delight in it.

"Oh!" cried one, who had pricked himself

with the Darning-Needle. "There's a fellow for you."

"I'm not a fellow, I'm a young lady," said the Darning-Needle.

But nobody listened to her. The sealing wax had come off, and she had turned black; but black makes one look slender, and she thought herself finer even than before.

"Here comes an eggshell sailing along," said the boys; and they stuck the Darning-Needle fast into the eggshell.

"White walls, and black myself! that looks well," remarked the Darning-Needle. "Now one can see me. I only hope I shall not be seasick!" But she was not seasick at all. "One is proof against seasickness if one has a steel stomach and does not forget that one is a little more than an ordinary person! The finer one is, the more one can bear."

"Crack!" went the eggshell, for a handbarrow went over her.

"How it crushes one!" said the Darning-Needle. "I'm getting seasick now—I'm quite sick."

But she was not really sick, though the handbarrow had run over her; she lay there at full length, and there she may lie.

THE QUEEN OF THE UNDERWORLD

CERES, goddess of agriculture, had one daughter, named Proserpina, whom she loved more than anything else in earth or sky. Sometimes Proserpina accompanied her mother as she journeyed over the earth in her dragon-car, making the corn grow; sometimes she traveled about the earth by herself, tending the flowers, which were her special care; but what she liked best was to stray with her companions, the nymphs, on the slopes of Mount Aetna.

"I, a maiden, dwelt
With loved Demeter[1] on the sunny plains
Of our own Sicily. There, day by day,
I sported with my playmate goddesses
In virgin freedom. Budding age made gay
Our lightsome feet, and on the flowery slopes
We wandered daily, gathering flowers to weave
In careless garlands for our locks, and passed
The days in innocent gladness."

All the year round the maidens enjoyed these pleasures, for never yet had the change of seasons

1. The Greeks and Romans, while they believed in many of the same gods, had different names for them. The Latin names are the ones most commonly used. Thus the goddess whom the Romans called Ceres, the Greeks knew as Demeter, while her daughter, Proserpina, was by the Greeks called Persephone. The poetic quotations used in this story are from the *Epic of Hades*, by Lewis Morris.

appeared upon the earth; never had the cold, sunless days come to make the earth barren.

"There was then
Summer nor winter, springtide nor the time
Of harvest, but the soft unfailing sun
Shone always, and the sowing time was one
With reaping; fruit and flower together sprung
Upon the trees; and the blade and ripened ear
Together clothed the plains."

One day while they played and laughed and sang, vying with each other as to which could make the most beautiful garlands, they were startled by a strange rumbling sound. Nearer it came, louder it grew; and suddenly to the frightened eyes of the maidens there appeared a great chariot, drawn by four wild-looking, foam-flecked black steeds. Not long did the girls gaze at the horses or the chariot—all eyes were drawn in fascination to the driver of the car. He was handsome as only a god could be, and yet so gloomy that all knew instantly he could be none other than Pluto, king of the underworld.

Suddenly, while his horses were almost at full speed, he jerked them to a standstill. Then he sprang to the ground, seized Proserpina in his arms, mounted his chariot, and was off before the frightened nymphs could catch their breath to cry out. Poor Proserpina screamed and wept, but no one was near to help her or even to hear her. On they flew, Pluto doing his best

to console the weeping girl, but refusing, with a stern shake of the head and a black frown, her plea that she might be allowed to return to her own home, or at least to bid farewell to her mother.

"Never!" he exclaimed. "I have as much

PLUTO APPEARS

right as the other gods to a beautiful wife; and since I knew that you, whom I had seen and loved, would not go with me willingly, I took this way to compel you."

When they came at last to the bank of a raging river, and were obliged to halt, Proser-

pina redoubled her cries, but still no one heard. Pluto, fuming and fretting and calling down curses on the River Cyane, which thus opposed his passage, seized his great two-pronged fork and struck the earth a terrific blow. To Proserpina's horror a great cavern opened before them, into which they were rapidly whirled. Then, with a crash, the chasm closed behind them, and they moved on in utter darkness. The horses seemed to find their way as easily as in the light, however, and Pluto heaved a sigh of relief as the last of the daylight disappeared.

"Do not tremble so, my fair Proserpina," he said, in a voice far from unkind. "When your eyes become accustomed to the gloom, you will find it much more restful than the glare we have left behind us."

Proserpina's only reply was "My mother! O, my poor mother!" And truly Ceres deserved pity. She had hastened at evening back to her home in Sicily, happy in the thought of seeing her daughter, only to find that daughter gone. The nymphs had retreated, long before, to their beds of seaweed in the green ocean, and no one else could give the poor distracted mother any news. When black night had really settled over the earth, Ceres closed the door of her home, vowing never to open it until she returned with Proserpina. Then, lighting a torch, she set forth, alone and on foot, to seek her daughter.

From country to country she roamed, all

over the earth, neither eating nor sleeping, but spending day and night in her search. Of every one she met she demanded, "Have you seen my daughter?"

No one recognized her; and small wonder, for her grief had changed her in appearance from a radiant goddess to a haggard, sad-eyed old woman. "Mad," whispered people as they passed her; for her clothes were ragged and flapping about her, and always, even in the brightest sunlight, she bore in her hand the lighted torch.

One day, weary and hopeless, she sank upon a stone by the roadside, and sat there with her head in her hands, wondering to what land she could next turn her footsteps. A soft, pitying voice broke in upon her grief, and she raised her head to see two young girls standing before her.

"Poor old woman," said one, "why are you so sad?"

"Ah," cried Ceres, "when I look upon you I am sadder still, for I have lost my only child."

Impulsively the older girl held out her hand. "Come with us," she urged. "We are the daughters of the king of this country, and were but now seeking through the city for a nurse for our baby brother, Triptolemus. You, who have lost the child you loved—will you not take charge of our brother and bestow on him some of your love?"

Touched by their kindness, Ceres followed them; and indeed, she felt the first joy she had known since the disappearance of her daughter

when the little prince was put into her arms. But such a weak, puny, wailing princelet as he was! Ceres smiled down at him, and bent her head and kissed him; when, to the utter amazement of those gathered about, he ceased the crying which he had kept up for days, smiled, and clapped his little hands. And, unless their eyes much deceived them, he began to grow round and rosy and well!

"Will you give this child entirely into my keeping?" asked Ceres.

"Gladly, gladly!" exclaimed the mother, Metanira. For who would not have been glad to engage a nurse whose mere touch worked such wonders?

But as the child's bedtime drew near, Metanira became worried and restless. No one but herself had ever tended him before—was it really safe to trust this stranger? At least, she would watch; and quietly she stole to the door which separated her own apartment from that which had been given to Ceres. The stranger sat before the hearth, with the crowing, happy baby on her knee. Gently she drew off his clothing, gently she anointed him with some liquid, the delicious perfume of which reached Metanira. Then, murmuring some sounding, rhythmic words, she leaned forward and placed him on the glowing coals.

Shrieking, Metanira rushed into the room and caught up her baby, burning herself badly in the act; and furiously she turned to the aged nurse.

"How dare you—" she began; but there she

stopped; for before her stood, not the ragged stranger, but a woman taller than mortal, with flowing yellow hair, bound with a wreath of wheat ears and red poppies. And from her face shone a light so bright that Metanira was well-nigh blinded.

"O queen," she said gravely, "thy curiosity and thy lack of faith have cost thy son dear. Immortality was the gift I meant to bestow upon him, but now he shall grow old and die at last as other men." And with these words the goddess vanished.[2]

Still finding no trace of her daughter, Ceres cursed the earth and forbade it to bring forth fruit until Proserpina should be found.

"Then on all lands
She cast the spell of barrenness; the wheat
Was blighted in the ear, the purple grapes
Blushed no more on the vines."

Great indeed must have been the anguish of this kindest of all goddesses when she could bring herself to adopt such measures. Even the grief and want of the people among whom she moved could not waken her pity.

One day, when her wanderings had brought her back to Italy, Ceres came to the bank of the Cyane River, and there, glittering at her feet,

2. Although Ceres was unable to do all she wished for Triptolemus, she did not forget him. When he grew up she loaned him her dragon-car and sent him about the world teaching people how to till the soil, and, in particular, to use the plow. It was Triptolemus who instituted the great festival at Eleusis which was held in honor of Ceres.

was the girdle which she had watched her daughter put on the last day she saw her. Torn between hope and fear, Ceres snatched it up. Had Proserpina, then, been drowned in this raging river? At any rate, it was much, after all these months, to find something which her dear daughter had touched, and with renewed energy she started on. As she rested, late in the day, by the side of a cool, sparkling fountain, she fancied she heard words mingling with the plashing of the water. Holding her breath, she listened:

"O Ceres," came the words, scarcely distinguishable, "I make a long journey underground, to cool my waters ere they burst forth at this point. As I passed through the lower world, I saw, seated beside Pluto on his gloomy throne, a queen, crowned with stars and poppies. Strangely like Proserpina she looked."

The words died away, and Ceres, knowing well that none but the king of the gods could help her now, hastened to Olympus and cast herself at the feet of Jupiter.

"Listen, O father of gods and men," she said. "What is that sound which you hear rising from the earth?"

"It sounds to me," replied Jupiter, "like the wailing of men, joined with the bleating of sheep and the lowing of cattle. Who is afflicting my people on earth?"

"It is I," replied Ceres sternly; "I, of old their best friend. Never shall spear of grass or blade of corn show above ground, never shall

blossom or fruit appear on any tree, until my beloved daughter is brought back to me from the realm of Pluto."

Then indeed there was consternation on Olympus; for Jupiter did not wish to anger his brother, and yet, how could he let the earth continue to be barren? There was much consulting of the Fates, those three dread sisters whose decrees even Jupiter could not break, and finally Jupiter called Mercury to him, and said:

"Hasten to the lower world, and lead thence Proserpina, the daughter of Ceres. Only, if during her stay there she have allowed food to pass her lips, she shall not return."

Meanwhile, Proserpina had been dwelling in gloom. How could one whose chief care had been the flowers, whose chief joy had been to stray abroad in the sunshine with gay companions, be happy in a realm where the sun never shone, where no flowers ever grew save the white, sleep-bringing poppies, where she had no companions except the gloomy king of the dead? Pluto was kind to her, he showered jewels upon her, and gorgeous raiment; but what meant such things to her when she could not delight with them the eyes of her mother and her friends? The dead over whom she reigned she could not even make happy, and the only one who seemed to have profited at all by her coming to Hades was Pluto, who was of a certainty somewhat less stern and gloomy.

Of all the food that had been set before Proserpina since she entered Hades, nothing had

tempted her but a pomegranate, and of that she had eaten but six seeds. This one taste of food, however, she soon had reason to regret, for ere long Mercury, Jupiter's messenger, stood before Pluto and cried with a flourish:

"Hear the decree of mighty Jupiter and of the Fates, powerful over all. The Lady Proserpina shall return with me, the messenger of mighty Jupiter, to the upper world. Only, if she have allowed food to pass her lips, she shall not return, but shall remain queen of the dead forever."

Proserpina turned pale—paler than her months underground had made her—but she said nothing. Then, from the throng of spirits who had crowded round to see the messenger of the gods, stepped forth one, Ascalaphus. No pity for the white-faced, sad-eyed queen moved him as he told how he had seen Proserpina eat of the pomegranate. Poor Proserpina felt that she would never see her beloved mother again, and was overwhelmed with grief when the messenger of the gods, the first cheerful personage she had seen since leaving earth, turned to depart.

Mercury was a kindly god, and he described to his father and the Fates most touchingly the grief of Proserpina. Ceres joined her tears with those of her daughter, and the Fates finally decreed that while Proserpina must spend underground one month of every year for each pomegranate seed she had eaten, she might spend the rest of her time on earth. Back

hastened Mercury with the new decree, and Pluto unwillingly let his wife go. She bade him an almost affectionate farewell, for after all, he had been good to her, and she might quite have loved him had his abode been a less gloomy place.

Up the dark and dangerous passages to earth Mercury conducted her, and it was strange to see how, as she stepped forth into the sunshine, her pallor and her sadness left her, and she became the bright-eyed, happy Proserpina of old. And not only in her did the change appear. About her, on all sides, the grass and corn came shooting through the dry brown earth. Violets, hyacinths, daisies were everywhere, and Proserpina stooped and caressed them, with a gay laugh. But what was her joy when she saw at the door of her home Mother Ceres, with arms outstretched to greet her! Not even the thought of the separation which must surely come again could sadden their meeting. For that day they sat together and talked of all that had happened in the weary months gone by; but the next morning Ceres mounted her dragon-car for the first time in many, many days, and set forth to the fields to tend the new grain, while Proserpina ran to the seashore and with a happy shout called the nymphs, her old companions, from their seaweed beds.

Each year thereafter, when Proserpina was led by Mercury to Pluto's kingdom, Ceres, in grief and anger, shut herself up and would not attend to her duties, so that the earth was barren

and drear. Each year, with the return of Proserpina, the flash of green ran across the fields and announced her coming before she appeared in sight. And all the people, weary and depressed after the hard, bitter months, joyed with Ceres at her daughter's approach, and cried with her, "She comes! She comes! Proserpina!"

This story, like that of Phaethon, is a nature myth; that is, it accounts for natural phenomena which the Greeks saw about them. As they conceived of Ceres, the earth goddess, as the kindest of the immortals, and of her daughter, Proserpina, the goddess of flowers and beautifying vegetation, as always young and happy, they found it hard to explain the barrenness of the winter months. Why should Ceres and Proserpina neglect the earth during a part of the year, so that it would bring forth nothing, no matter how much care was bestowed upon it?

We must remember that the people who invented these stories really believed that the earth produced grain and fruit because some goddess bestowed upon it her care. They even fancied, sometimes, as they entered their fields, that they saw Ceres, with her dragon-car and her crown of wheat ears, vanishing before them. And they did not say, during winter months "The ground is hard and frozen, and thus cannot give food to the plants"; or, "The seed must lie underground for a time before it can send its roots down and its leaves up, and bring forth

fruit." They said, "Mother Ceres is neglecting the earth."

What more natural, then, than that they should imagine that the earth goddess was mourning for the loss of something and refusing to attend to her duties? And since the flowers, the special care of Ceres's daughter, disappeared at the same time, it seemed most likely that it was this daughter who had disappeared, stolen and held captive underground. When, each year, the time of her captivity was at an end, Ceres went joyfully back to her work, the flowers and grass once more appeared—in a word, it was spring.

Looked at in a slightly different way, Proserpina represented the seed which is placed underground. For a time it is held there, apparently gone forever; but at last it appears above the earth in fresher, brighter guise, just as the daughter of Ceres reappeared.

It is held by some that this myth is a symbol or allegory of the death of man and his ultimate resurrection. That, however, does not seem extremely likely, as the ancients, although they believed in the life of the soul after death, conceived of that life as something far from pleasant, even for those who had led good lives.

The story of Proserpina has been used as a subject for many paintings. One of the best-known of these is Rosetti's "Persephone," which shows her as she stands, sad-eyed, with the bitten fruit in her hand.

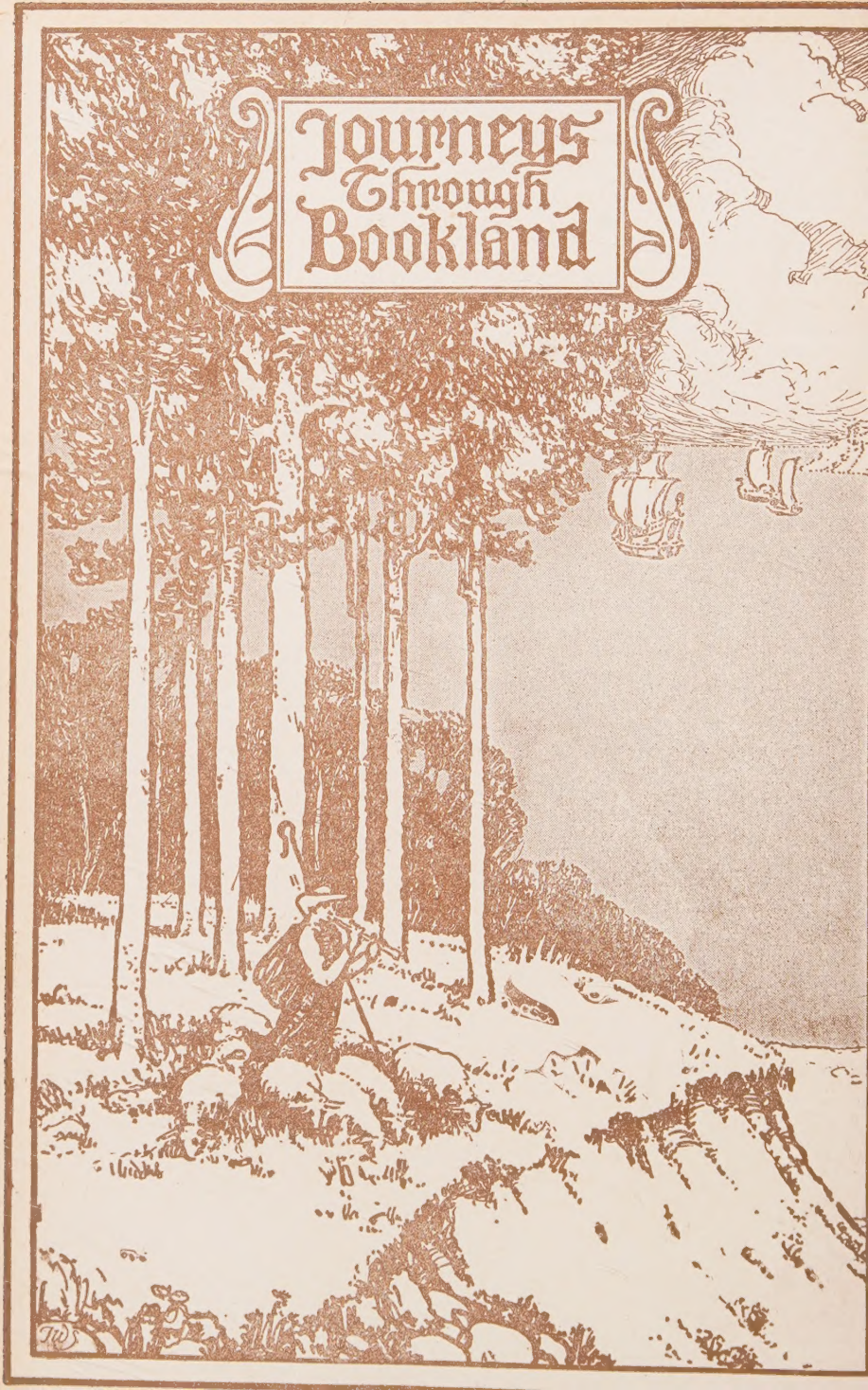
PRONUNCIATION OF PROPER NAMES

NOTE,—The pronunciation of difficult words is indicated by respelling them phonetically. *N* is used to indicate the French nasal sound; *K* the sound of *ch* in German; *u* the sound of the German *ü* and French *u*; *ö* the sound of *ö* in foreign languages.

AEGIR, *e′ jur*
AETNA, *et′ nah*
AESOP, *e′ sop*
AHASUERUS, *a haz″ u e′ rus*
ALCIBIADES, *al sy bi′ a deez*
APOLLO, *a pol′ lo*
ASCALAPHUS, *as kal′ a fus*
ASCHAM, *as′ kam*
ASGARD, *ahs′ gahrd*
AUBURN, *aw′ burn*
BABYLON, *bab′ y lun*
BELLEROPHON, *bel ler′ o fon*
BREIDABLIK, *bri′ da blik*
CEPHALOPOD, *sef′ a lo pod*
CERES, *seer′ eez*
DU CHAILLU, *dü shay yü′*
CHANTILLY, *shahn til′ le*
CHIMERA, *ki me′ rah*
CLYMENE, *klim′ e ne*
CONVOLVULUS, *kon vol′ vu lus*
CYANE, *si′ an e*
DEMETER, *de me′ tur*

Draupnir, *drowp′ neer*
Frigga, *frig′ gah*
Giall, *gi′ ahl*
Göttingen, *göt′ ting en*
Hammedatha, *ham med′ a thah*
Hege, *he′ je*
Heimdal, *hime′ dahl*
Hela, *he′ lah*
Helicon, *hel′ i con*
Hippocrene, *hip o kre′ ne*
Iobates, *i ob′ a teez*
Julius Cæsar, *ju′ lius se′ zer*
Lycia, *lish′ i ah*
Matsuyana, *mah″ tsoo yah′ nah*
Metanira, *met a ni′ rah*
Mordecai, *mor′ de ki*
Munchausen, *mun chaw′ sen*
Nebuchadnezzar, *neb″ u kad nez′ zar*
Nicholas, *nik′ o las*
Odense, *o′ den sa*
Pegasus, *peg′ a sus*
Persephone, *per sef′ o ne*
Phaethon, *fa′ e thon*
Pirene, *pi re′ ne*
Proserpina, *pro ser′ pin ah*
Raphael, *rah′ fa el*
Sif, *sif*
Sigyn, *se′ gen*
Slagelse, *slah′ gel se*
Sleipnir, *sleep′ nur*
Thok, *tök*
Thor, *thor*, or *tor*
Triptolemus, *trip tol′ e mus*

TYR, *teer*
VALHALLA, *val hahl′ lah*
VALKYRIES, *val kir′ eez*
VASHTI, *vash′ ti*
XANTHUS, *zan′ thus*
XERXES, *zurk′ seez*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